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BY

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INTRODUCTORY

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I THINK I can count to-day, if ever, upon your prayers. Try to picture what it must mean to speak as Bishop to this Diocese—within this Choir—on such an occasion as is ours to-day.

For a man to dwell over much or over often upon his own deficiencies is, I well know, paralysing to himself rather than stimulating to others. But comparisons so humiliating as to be nearly overwhelming must rush in upon the soul at such an hour, in a place so fraught with every memory, every association, that adds lustre to the records of thirteen centuries of the Church's storied life on this its holy ground. *Circumspice. Respice.* Yes, and tremble. But there is another Voice. We heard it, we felt it just now. *Sursum corda.* It is at His call that we are here, in order that we may, if it be His will—and it is His will—go back hence with loins regirded, with lights rekindled, for our battles and our work. That, I suppose, is in part what a Visitation means for all. But it means more. In the words of one who stands

Meaning
of a Visi-
tation.

pre-eminent among the teachers of our age, "It is a foreshadowing and a forecast of the great and final Visitation, when the Master Himself returning shall demand an account of His talents, when the Chief Shepherd shall reappear and require His flock at our hands." ¹

The
Divine
side.

You will remember how the word translated "Visitation"—the word ἐπίσκοπή—finds a place in the New Testament, and in how solemn a connexion; nothing less than the Lord's own message when "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."² Again and again in the Old Testament, too, we come upon the exact phrase. Sometimes it is used of God Himself, sometimes of His ministers or representatives.³ The thought is oversight, inspection, vigilant and sympathetic governance, strict account asked and taken as to the use of privilege and opportunity.⁴ To no man here—I say it in all sincerity—can the thought be so searching, can the words suggest so much, as to him whose office as ἐπίσκοπος under the "Shepherd and Bishop of our souls,"⁵ is called into peculiar and perilous exercise at such a time. His heart would be "hard of fibre and chill of current" who did not himself strive to answer to that solemn call when he suggests to others its significance.

¹ Bishop Lightfoot, *Primary Charge*, 1882, p. 3.

² e.g., S. Luke xix. 44. Cf. 1 Tim. iii. 1; 1 Peter ii. 12.

³ Job x. 12; Isaiah x. 3; Jeremiah vi. 15, &c.

⁴ See *The Visitation of the Kingdom of God*, a Charge by the Bishop of Chester, 1896, p. 17.

⁵ 1 Peter ii. 25.

You will find it worth while to go back in thought to some of the occasions on which the word "Visitation," ἐπισκοπή, is used in Holy Scripture. Job, for example, the servant of God, tells how, in his life past, the ἐπισκοπή, the Visitation of the Lord, had stirred and quickened him for work or for endurance.¹ Or Isaiah, in one of the grandest of his trumpet-calls to a callous careless people, bids them remember that the Lord does see and care and know, and that His "Visitation," His day of inquiry and of reckoning, will surely come. The prophet's eye sees that day closing in the darkest night of which a Jewish heart could think—the end of their opportunity.²

The phrase has, throughout, a solemn meaning. But trace the word, or rather the thought embodied in the word, and you will find it clear, as has been well said, that the central motive of His Visitation is always love : love fulfilling itself in many ways, taking shape according to the conditions and characters, the work or lack of work with which it has to deal. Be it ours, then, in thought and prayer and resolve, to go far deeper, far higher, than any mere notion of a Diocesan Visitation, however solemn, can carry us. It is the great *Pastor pastorum*, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, who is Himself speaking face to face with every one of us.

But to come down now to its human side. Strange to say, there has been no Episcopal Visitation of this Diocese for fifteen years. The failing health of one

The
human
side.

¹ Job x. 12.

² Isaiah x. 3.

loved and venerable Bishop, and the too brief tenure of the See by his successor, give the reason for this most unusual interval. Time was, a generation or two since, when such a pause would have mattered more than it matters now. Until some thirty or forty years ago a Visitation was practically the only occasion—a Visitation Charge the only medium—of communication between a Bishop and his Diocese as a whole, on matters affecting either the diocese or the Church at large. Once every three or four or seven years, as the case might be, the Diocesan put forth his manifesto in the form of a Charge, and, worthily or unworthily, it stood out prominently from its isolation. Nowadays all is different. Diocesan Conferences, and meetings public and private of every kind, give such ample opportunity for speech and counsel, for testing progress and repairing deficiencies, that the intermission of a quadrennial Visitation in the year when, according to precedent, it ought to come, is perhaps scarcely noticed, and is, I am certain, very readily condoned.

But the fourth year is drawing to a close since I was here installed as Bishop; and I have desired, for my own sake and for yours, that we should furnish the facts and figures a Visitation requires, and should meet in our full numbers for a Solemn Service of Holy Communion, and for such words of counsel as it is my part to offer you.

The answers you have severally furnished to the full enquiries I sent out give me food for thought, for thankfulness, for anxiety, for hope. To some of the facts and figures therein set forth I hope to return in

my final Address a few days hence, when I shall try to deal in some detail with what specially belongs to the great Diocese in which our own work lies.

To many of you to whom I speak, the very compiling of those figures has served to suggest comparison with other days, and to recall the faces, the words, and the work of not a few whom we shall see no more on earth.

Not one of us, probably, but had such guides and friends in mind when in this morning's Eucharist we joined our prayers and praises, not only "with angels and archangels," but "with all the company of heaven."

It would be a vain task for me to try to run over now a bede-roll of such names. The day may come when, in the larger workfield beyond, we shall

Know them by look and voice, and thank them all
 For helping us in thrall,
 For words of hope and bright examples given,
 To show through moonless skies that there is light
 in heaven.

But I dare not pass over quite in silence the names of the two great Fathers in God through whom, during these eventful years since last a Visitation was held, the sacred trust now laid upon my shoulders has been handed down.

Bishops of
 Winchester
 in
 recent
 times.

I remember on one occasion hearing Mr. Gladstone dwell upon what he regarded as a peculiar characteristic of the Church of England; the fact that those who occupy her foremost posts are able therein to use with-

out restraint whatever special gifts and graces are their own. He thought—I do not stay to discuss the question—that in another Communion than ours there is less scope for this individuality, less freedom from the limitations of a monotonous rule. He was alluding specially to the character, the interests and the work of the four successive Archbishops of Canterbury whom he had intimately known, and he dwelt with his wonted energy upon what he thought was the gain secured to the Church from such variety. The memory of that talk has come back to me many a time when I have looked, in search of information or stimulus or counsel, at the Biographies of my four immediate predecessors in this See. Of Bishop Sumner and Bishop Wilberforce I had no personal knowledge. Their works do follow them. The example set in Bishop Sumner's forty years' episcopate has borne the fruit God gives to seed faithfully sown day by day with the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man. To his notable and untiring work, and to the records of it contained in his successive Charges, I shall have occasion to refer in connection with our special Diocesan needs and deficiencies. The eloquent and versatile energy of his successor, who for four short years inspired and stimulated this Diocese from end to end, is a heritage whereof the whole Church knows and reaps the value.

Bishop
Sumner.

Bishop
Wilber-
force.

Bishop
Harold
Browne.

Of Bishop Harold Browne, who in this See was for seventeen years the honoured guide and counsellor and friend of clergy and laity alike, whose quiet scholarly wisdom earned for him as striking a place in the central life of the National Church as his beauty and charm

of character secured in the hearts of all who knew him, I need scarcely speak, because you could tell of it as well as I can. But it is surely worth while for us to note with thankful hearts how real and practical to a Diocese like ours, or to any Diocese, is the boon of such variety of service as was rendered by the three great Bishops whom I have named. They differed from one another in almost every outward characteristic : but in devotion to the cause of our Master they were absolutely at one. And then, to add as it were another type to this succession of men of God, there came, for the last four years of his busy life, the Bishop whom I have twice been privileged to follow. Ere he came to Winchester the best work of his life was done. The place he will always occupy in the history of the Church of England is due to what he did in the creation, for it was nothing less, of the manifold and vigorous corporate life which is aglow in that hugest area of poverty—London south of the Thames. We in Winchester, to whose Diocese that area once belonged, we who look back to St. Saviour's, Southwark, for so much that makes us famous, are thankful to remember that the man of our own day to whom South London owes so much, stands too upon the great roll of the Bishops of Winchester. Here, also, his rule, though brief, was memorable. I have many a time had occasion to tell you what I feel about his work—a work stamped always with the unique marks of his quite peculiar personality : the quiet tenacity of purpose, the buoyant hopefulness, the dauntless energy of will, the epigrammatic force of every spoken and

Bishop
Thorold.

written word, and, above all, the tireless devotion of soul to the daily service of the Lord.

I recall to your minds this remarkable quaternion of workmen not for the sake of thus praising them, but to suggest to you afresh how widely different may be, nay will be, the "make" of the several men to whom the Lord commits in turn some weighty trust, and how He uses each and all to contribute something to the working of His one great purpose for the world He came to save.

A Bishop's
duty—

My brothers, it would be out of place for me to say all I feel about the qualifications which are, or would be, needed for filling aright this special office in the Church of England. Our Diocese has features distinctively its own. Its great traditions, with their corresponding duties, are (for reasons secular and sacred) in some degree unique. Its variety of topography and circumstance has no parallel in England.

(a) To this
Diocese ;

Compare and contrast, for example, the needs of such parishes, say, as these: Portsea, Weybridge, St. Peter's Bournemouth, Eastleigh, Highclere, Aldershot, Sark, Whippingham.

The Bishop is rightly called upon to be in touch day by day with the strangely varied needs and interests which these names suggest, to find time for looking personally into the circumstances of each such parish—we have 566 parishes in all—and to have ready at call the appropriate word of counsel or stimulus, of encouragement or warning, which may at any moment be required. This is all as it should be. It is one main purpose for which a Bishop exists. But he is, besides,

and not less rightly, expected to be giving time and thought to a whole multitude of central things in the life of the Nation or the Church, things quite other than Diocesan. Look back into any period you will of English History, and see the part which the Bishops whose tombs surround you in this Choir have always taken, as in duty bound, in such central matters as affected at the time the wellbeing, and especially the moral and religious wellbeing, of the English people. Unless I am strangely mistaken, it is not the wish of contemporary Churchmen, whether lay or clerical, that their Bishops should now for the first time in our history be so exclusively local officers as to have neither time nor opportunity for interests which are larger still.

(b) To outside work.

To evolve a working plan for the combination of these conflicting duties is no doubt a task to baffle any man. As I try to do it month by month I gratefully recognise that it is what you, whose claim upon your Bishop's time and energy stands indisputably first, desire him to do. He is set in this peculiar office, which has its duly assigned niche in our National history past and present, to be in some sense your representative and mouthpiece for dealing with moral as well as with religious questions in the public life of England.

Sacred and secular.

To give practical examples of what I mean. When questions directly affecting the affairs of the Clergy, or the system of our Church Schools, or the observance of Sunday, and so forth are under discussion, it is expected, as a matter of course that the Bishops should take an active part. But in my judgment they are not less truly called upon—especially while they have a place

in the National Legislature—to accept and use their responsibility in other matters which concern the social and moral health of our citizens and their children, say the protection of infant life from cruelty and wrong—or such amendment of our prison laws as shall make them remedial as well as punitive,—or provision for the cases of workmen who are injured in the discharge of duty—or enactments for checking commercial immorality—or arrangements for promoting the health of shop assistants.

Bishops, in short, are entrusted, as I believe, with a place in the Legislature not only for what are technically called Ecclesiastical questions, but for whatever things directly concern the moral life and the social well-being of the English people. In Archbishop Benson's striking words :

“ All these social difficulties and solutions—what have they to do with the Church's work? Are these not secular and economic questions? Yes, and therefore Church questions of deepest moment. These are the phenomena of the very world in which Christ is now living. These form the Times of Christ. We are asking what He says to them.”¹

Pardon my having dwelt upon this point. My anxiety is simply this, that we should feel ourselves to be working together when, at some sacrifice here and there of the Diocesan Bishop's presence at gatherings or Services in our parishes in which he would fain take constant part, Bishop and Clergy become, for the moment, joint labourers, “ true yoke-fellows ” in things

¹ *Christ and His Times*, p. 66.

which do so truly affect the cause of Christ in English life.

Turn now more closely to our Visitation and the thoughts it brings. I have asked myself persistently what subject it would be well that we should speak about, think about, pray about, in these anxious Visitation days.

Choice of
subject
for our
Visitation.

In face of what I have already referred to as to the opportunities annually given in Diocesan Conferences and the like, I doubt whether a quadrennial Visitation Charge is now best occupied in recounting what are called the Church events which have occurred in the intervening years. Rather, as it seems to me, should we do well to take some subject, or group of subjects, which is "in the air," and to treat it with such approach to thoroughness as is possible in the time at our disposal, with additional suggestions for deeper study and more systematic thought. I am the more bound to make such an endeavour now, for the following reason.

Speaking in Winchester to our Diocesan Conference, just twelve months ago, I called attention to certain dangers, underlying, as I think, not a few of the modern innovations or revivals whether in doctrine or in the ritual by which doctrine is expressed. I promised to return to the subject in my Visitation Charge. That promise I fulfil, and I now begin by stating, quite briefly, but with such clearness as I can attain, what my contention is.

By the English Reformation we mean the whole process of change, covering nearly a century and a half,

Results
of the
Reforma-
tion in
England.

from 1534 to 1662, which issued in results so momentous to the nation and the Church. Apart from what would commonly but inadequately be called its civil and secular results, and they were great, it issued—

First, in the circulation of the English Bible.

Secondly, in the distinctive character of the Church of England as it stands—with its own Prayer Book, Ordinal, Articles, Ritual, and usages of every kind.

Thirdly, in what, for lack of a better general term, we may call Puritanism—a form of English Christianity outside the pale of the National Church, but a vigorous, a recognised, and, with whatever drawbacks, on the whole a valuable element in our National life and history.

From about the middle of the Seventeenth Century onward all these influences have been ceaselessly contributing to make us what we are.

Upon the first and third I need not now dwell.

The English Bible, unlike the Vernacular Bible of other peoples, is the work of a Church and not of a man—or, rather, as the Bishop of Durham has said,¹ “It is a growth and not a work. Countless external influences, independent of the actual translators, contributed to mould it; and when it was fashioned, the Christian instinct of the nation, touched, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, decided on its authority. . . . As it gathered into itself, during the hundred years that it was forming, the treasures of manifold labours, so it still has the same assimilative power of life.”

Of a quite different sort is the debt which we owe to

¹ *History of the English Bible*, p. 295.

Puritanism in its various forms and developments. But upon that subject I cannot enter to-day. I hope to return to it on some future occasion, if God will.

In the meantime I would speak, simply and without reserve, of our own peculiar heritage, the Church of England—Scriptural, Primitive, Catholic, Reformed—possessing, prizing, nourishing “things new and old;” tracing back its lineage to the very beginning of our island story, yet in many of its characteristics the outcome of those successive generations of turmoil and questioning, that century and a half of eager strife among good men—of exaggeration and misunderstanding, of swinging pendulums and hot reactions—which we know as the age of the English Reformation.

That Reformation has been described by Archbishop Benson, no mean authority, as “a ripe and long-prepared and matured movement in an era of illumination, the greatest event in Church history since the Fourth Century.”¹

It is hardly necessary to remind you, my reverend brethren, that in England its character was unique. The Reformation in Germany, Denmark, Holland, Geneva, Scotland, differs from the Reformation in England not in degree but in kind. To us, and to us only, was it given to preserve unbroken our continuity with our own past life, while we eagerly assimilated the gains which sprung from the struggle on behalf of liberty against centralisation, the setting

¹ *Fishers of Men*, p. 125.

forward of motives as against works, and the revolt against unreality and externalism.¹

The time has gone by for regarding the Reformation, whether on the Continent or in England, as an epoch of the flawless triumph of right over wrong, or for belauding its champions as the immaculate heroes of a new creation.

“It would be easy,” says Bishop Westcott in a noteworthy passage in one of his earlier books,² “It would be easy to point out the weakness of the Reformation in itself as a power of organisation. Its function was to quicken rather than to create, to vivify old forms rather than to establish new. But, however we may grieve over its failure when it arrogated the office not of restoration but of reconstruction, it was a distinct advance in Christian life. Where it failed, it failed from the neglect of the infirmities of man and of the provisions which have been divinely made to meet them. On the other hand, the lessons which it taught are still fruitful throughout Christendom, and destined, as we hope, to bring forth a still more glorious harvest.”

It is on some of these lessons that I desire to dwell during this Visitation, applying them, if by God’s help we can do so, to some of the facts and strifes and questionings with which we have ourselves to deal.

Partisan
theories
of the
Reforma-
tion.

Nothing, of course, is easier in our modern disputations than to find support for our own theories in the utterance of this man or that during the controversies of the Sixteenth Century. I find it difficult to think

¹ See *The English Reformation and its Consequences*, by Professor Collins, p. 15.

² *Gospel of the Resurrection*, chapter 1, § 43, p. 103.

of any theory gravely maintained by anybody during our present-day agitations which could not be buttressed—*valeat quantum*—by the authority of some disputant of that period. The process is this. You point out to your opponent, at whose lapse of memory you express surprise, that he has forgotten how clearly the principle which you are maintaining was laid down at the Reformation. He has obviously overlooked a passage in, let us say, Cranmer, or Ridley, or the Second Prayer Book, or the Book of Homilies, in which the principle was set forth so distinctly that to challenge it now is to repudiate the Reformation itself.

Or put it in another way. You are amazed that your friend can have supposed such and such a principle to be sound, nay, to be even tolerable, if the Catholic basis of the Church of England be admitted. Let him remember the Preamble to the Statute of Appeals; let him look at the first Prayer Book of Edward VI.; let him see what was said and what was left unsaid by Queen Elizabeth herself if he would realise what the Reformation settlement actually meant and how little there was in it which deserved the name of Protestantism.

With this method of controversy on either side, as unconvincing to the well-informed as it is misleading to the ignorant, the last eighteen months have made us painfully familiar.

My friends, there is “a more excellent way.” Our existing Prayer Book and formularies took final shape in 1662. They embody the ultimate outcome of the long and earnest strife to which I have referred. Cranmer and

The Book
of
Common
Prayer.

Ridley, Bucer and Calvin, Parker and Guest, Laud and Andrewes, Overall and Sanderson and Cosin, and many more, contributed each of them something of substance or adornment to the fabric skilfully and devoutly constructed upon the ancient lines. Nobody, I suppose, would allege that it is incapable of improvement, or that if we were nowadays compiling either Prayer Book or Articles we should do it in all details as it was done under the Tudors and the Stuarts. But if we long sometimes (and who but has occasionally longed?) for the power of freer adaptation to modern needs, we can thankfully remember what that rigid stereotype has saved us from, and what sort of Prayer Book we might have inherited if the Church of, say, a century ago, had been free to modify its forms at will.

There is, of course, no infallibility in the *ipsissima verba* of our Prayer Book as such. We ask for no Liturgiolatry. We do not claim that the words of every rubric are sacrosanct. What we claim is that on the whole our Prayer Book affords the surest test or touchstone we can get as to what is the deliberate mind of the Church of England on any point of doctrine or usage, the mind of that Church which we believe to be the best, the purest, the most Scriptural in Christendom, that Church which comes nearest to the mind of Christ. On Holy Scripture we, in the end, fall back. On Holy Scripture our Prayer Book is builded from the first page to the last. On "the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture" we stand.

It is to that Prayer Book, to those Articles, that we have every one of us subscribed. On the most solemn

occasions in your life and in mine we have deliberately declared our assent to the Articles and the Book of Common Prayer as containing the doctrine of the Church of England. On the strength of that declaration we were ordained, licensed, instituted. Therefore, when questions of difficulty arise, we are bound each one of us to ask, Am I honestly loyal to the Prayer Book in its true meaning? Have I taken the right steps to learn what its formularies and rules, as ultimately arrived at, actually mean? If I take the book as a whole, is the thing which I am invited to do, or which I wish to do, whether in teaching or in worship,—is it or is it not, according to the plain dictates of straightforward interpretation, consistent with the solemn promise I have made?

Our sub-
scription
to it.

To answer such questions is no mechanical process. By the alteration of our Subscription Form in 1865 a fresh responsibility was thrown upon every man in Holy Orders—the responsibility of considering the spirit as well as, nay rather than, the mere letter of our formularies, whether for faith (and therefore teaching) or for practice in outward act.

So far as outward act is concerned, we can fairly fall back, when in doubt, upon living authority, Episcopal or Archiepiscopal or judicial, as the case may be. But there is a whole range of teaching and tendency, the aggregate outcome of little acts and words and influences, which lies and must lie outside what can be ordered or forbidden in specific terms by the authority of either Book or Bishop.

And it is just here that a great group of our present difficulties is to be found.

With two such matters I propose in my present Visitation to deal. First, the use and abuse of Private Confession ; and, secondly, the instruction given and the devotions taught or encouraged, or not discouraged, in connection with the Holy Communion. Both of these are matters of high importance as to which a discretion and therefore a grave responsibility must rest with every Parish Priest. But it is a discretion which has definite limits, and these limits are, with care and patience, ascertainable by us all.

With respect to each, the teaching of the Church of England from 1662 onward has differed markedly and emphatically from what had been the teaching of the Church of England 150 years before.

In my next two Addresses I propose to examine what the difference is, and how far it is a question practically affecting the work and teaching of our Church to-day.

PRIVATE CONFESSION

“If ever there was a matter,” it has been said, “which required caution, sobriety of thought and diction, delicacy and tenderness in handling, knowledge of mankind, acquaintance with ecclesiastical and civil history, it is what is known as the penitentiary discipline of the Church, and especially that portion of it which relates to Confession.”¹ Yet it unfortunately happens that this question, which touches the very life blood of the Church, and hardly less directly the welfare of the State, has more, I think, than any other, been lightly, baldly, almost shamelessly bandied about for rough and ready discussion by controversialists who, if they do not actually scout those qualifications, would seem, by their example, to value them but little.

Delicacy
and diffi-
culty of the
subject of
Private
Con-
fession.

Imagine some student or enquirer from another country, wholly ignorant of the history of our Church, who should light upon a batch of the controversial literature now daily circulated by many earnest Protestants for the information of the unlearned. He would inevitably conclude, as a matter of simple fact, that at

¹ *Church Quarterly Review*, 1878, vol. v., p. 194.

the Reformation (whatever in such context that word be taken to mean), the whole idea of Private or Auricular Confession had been repudiated, and the thing itself extirpated for ever from the Church of England. But is it so?

That the change deliberately and of set purpose effected between 1534 and 1662 was radical and far-reaching, is beyond dispute, and the principles which actuated those who effected it are principles which lie at the very root of the English Reformation. But rubrics and history combine to show us how carefully the special wants of troubled souls were remembered and provided for, in this particular matter, by the compilers of our successive English Prayer Books.

At the risk of being tedious, it may be worth while to recall the significant steps of change.

Pre-Re-
formation
Rules.

For more than three centuries before the Reformation there had been no question whatever as to what the duty of Confession meant. The Fourth Lateran Council, held under Innocent III. in 1215, the last year of our unhappy King John, was, in point of numbers, one of the largest which ever met in Christendom. It decreed Auricular Confession to be a universal obligatory indispensable duty.

The Council's well-known Decree upon the subject runs as follows :—

Every one of the faithful of either sex, on coming to years of discretion, shall privately confess his or her sins faithfully at least once a year to his or her own Priest. . . .

If, however, any one should wish, for sufficient reason, to

confess his sins to a Priest other than his own, let him first ask and obtain sanction from his own Priest : otherwise the former cannot loose or bind him.¹

At the Council of Trent, in 1551, early in the Reformation period, the Lateran Rules were re-affirmed, and the usages authoritatively detailed. Let me quote a few sentences from the formal utterances of that Council, with regard, first, to the obligation of Confession before communicating:—

The
Council of
Trent.

One who desires to communicate should call to mind the Apostle's precept: Let a man examine himself. Now, ecclesiastical custom declares this examination to be necessary, so that no one conscious of mortal sin, however contrite he may think himself to be, ought to come to the Holy Eucharist without first making his Sacramental Confession. This rule, by decree of this sacred Synod, is to be always observed by all Christians, not excepting even those Priests whose duty it is to celebrate, provided a Confessor is to be had : but if from pressing necessity a Priest shall have celebrated without previous confession, let him take the earliest opportunity to confess.²

¹ Omnis utriusque sexus fidelis postquam ad annos discretionis pervenerit, omnia sua solus peccata confiteatur fideliter saltem semel in anno proprio sacerdoti. . . . Si quis autem alieno sacerdoti voluerit justa de causa sua confiteri peccata, licentiam prius postulet et obtineat a proprio Sacerdote, cum aliter ille ipsum non possit solvere vel ligare. *Concil. Gen. Lat. Cap. xxi.*

² Sessio xiii., caput vii.

Communicare volenti revocandum est in memoriam ejus præceptum : Probet seipsum homo. Ecclesiastica autem consuetudo declarat, eam probationem necessariam esse, ut nullus sibi conscius mortalis peccati, quamvis sibi contritus videatur, absque præmissa Sacramentali confessione ad sacram Euchar-

And again, in a formal Canon,

If any one shall say that faith alone is a sufficient preparation for taking the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist, let him be anathema. And lest any should take so great a Sacrament unworthily, and so to his death and condemnation, the Sacred Synod itself orders and declares that those who are burdened with the consciousness of mortal sin, though they think themselves never so contrite, must of necessity, if a Confessor is to be had, first make their Sacramental Confession.¹

On the general subject of Confession the Council speaks as follows :—

From the institution, as explained above, of the Sacrament of Penance, the whole Church has always understood that full Confession of sins was also instituted by our Lord, and that it is necessary by the law of God to all who have fallen after Baptism, because our Lord Jesus Christ, when about to ascend from earth to heaven, left behind priests as Vicars of Himself,

istiam accedere debeat. Quod a Christianis omnibus etiam ab iis sacerdotibus, quibus ex officio incubuerit celebrare, hæc sancta Synodus perpetuo servandum esse decrevit, modo non desit illis copia Confessoris: quod si, necessitate urgente, Sacerdos absque prævia confessione celebraverit, quam primum confiteatur.

¹ *Ib.*, canon xi.

Si quis dixerit solam fidem esse sufficientem præparationem ad sumendum Sanctissimæ Eucharistiæ Sacramentum: anathema sit. Et ne tantum Sacramentum indignè, atque ideò in mortem et condemnationem sumatur, statuit atque declarat ipsa sancta Synodus, illis quos conscientia peccati mortalis gravat, quantumcunque etiam se contritos existiment, habitâ copiâ Confessoris, necessariò præmittendam esse Confessionem Sacramentalem.

to be rulers and judges, to whom all mortal sins into which Christ's faithful have fallen are to be brought, to the end that, by virtue of the power of the keys, they may pronounce sentence of remission or retention of sins. From this it follows that all mortal sins, of which penitents, after diligent self-questioning, are conscious, ought to be enumerated in Confession, though they be of the most secret kind.¹

And again, in a formal Canon,

If any one shall deny that Sacramental Confession was both instituted and made necessary to salvation by the law of God, . . . let him be anathema.²

In the "Catechism" issued by the Council the subject is elaborated from every side, and always with a reiteration of the obligation binding upon all by Christ's own command.

Further let no man hold that our Lord did indeed insti-

¹ Sessio xiv., caput v.

Ex institutione Sacramenti Pœnitentiæ jam explicata, universa Ecclesia semper intellexit institutam etiam esse a Domino integram peccatorum Confessionem, et omnibus post Baptismum lapsis jure divino necessariam existere; quia Dominus noster Jesus Christus e terris ascensurus ad cœlos sacerdotes sui ipsius Vicarios reliquit, tanquam præsides et judices, ad quos omnia mortalia crimina deferantur in quæ Christi fideles ceciderint, quo, pro potestate Clavium remissionis aut retentionis peccatorum, sententiam pronuntient. . . . Ex his colligitur oportere a pœnitentibus omnia peccata mortalia quorum post diligentem sui discussionem conscientiam habent, in Confessione recenseri, etiam si occultissima illa sint.

² Sessio xiv., canon vi.

Si quis negaverit Confessionem Sacramentalem vel institutam vel ad salutem necessariam esse jure divino . . . anathema sit.

tute Confession, yet did not declare its use binding upon all.¹

And so on, chapter after chapter.

No hesitation there, at all events, as to what was meant. Confession, as thus taught, "laid open," as has been said,² "the whole heart of every one, from the Emperor to the peasant, before the priesthood. The entire moral being of man, undistinguishable from his religious being, was under their supervision and control, asserted on one side, acknowledged on the other."

Changes
made in
England.

The First
Prayer
Book.

To people who had been brought up under that system and were familiar with its working and its obligation, the change of rule implied, and indeed announced, in the English "Order of Communion" of 1548, and incorporated in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. which next year followed, must have been great indeed. Together with the English language, there was introduced a general Confession to be repeated "in the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion, either by one of them or else by one of the Ministers, or by the Priest himself." This general Confession in the Church, though not substituted for the private act, was formally allowed instead of it, as is shown by the Exhortation itself.³

¹ Catechismus, pars ii., cap. lvi.

Jam vero nemo existimet Confessionem a Domino quidem institutam, sed ita tamen ut ejus usum necessarium esse non edixerit

² Milman. *Latin Christianity*, Book xiv., chap. 1.

³ See Dixon's *History of the Church of England*, ii. 495.

Put yourselves for the moment in the place of a congregation of middle-aged people when they listened for the first time to this new Exhortation, and contrasted, not its actual directions only, but its whole tone and spirit, with the tone and spirit belonging to the pre-Reformation days, as illustrated by the quotations I have already given :

Dear friends, and you especially upon whose souls I have care and charge, on Sunday next I do intend, by God's grace, to offer to all such as shall be godly disposed, the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, to be taken by them in the remembrance of His most fruitful and glorious Passion The which Sacrament being so divine and holy a thing my duty is to exhort you in the mean season to search and examine your own consciences, and that not lightly nor after the manner of dissimulers with God, but as they which should come to a most godly and heavenly banquet The way and means thereto is, First that you be truly repentant of your former evil life, and *that you confess with an unfeigned heart to Almighty God* your sins and unkindness towards His Majesty committed, either by will, word or deed, infirmity or ignorance ; and that with inward sorrow and tears you bewail your offences and require of Almighty God mercy and pardon, promising to him, from the bottom of your hearts, the amendment of your former life And if any man have done any wrong to any other, let him make satisfaction before he comes to God's board, or at the least be in full mind and purpose so to do, as soon as he is able ; or else let him not come to this Holy Table, thinking to deceive God, who seeth all men's hearts. For neither the absolution of the Priest can anything avail them, nor the receiving of this holy Sacrament doth anything but increase their damnation. *And if there be any of you whose conscience is troubled and grieved in anything, lacking comfort or counsel*, let him come to me, or to

some other discreet and learned Priest, taught in the law of God, and confess and open his sin and grief secretly, that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice, and comfort that his conscience may be relieved, and that of us (as of the Ministers of God and of the Church) he may receive comfort and absolution, to the satisfaction of his mind, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness; requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the Auricular and secret Confession to the Priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the Priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God, and the general confession to the Church. But in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity; and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences, whereas he hath no warrant of God's Word to the same.

Such was the wording of the Exhortation contained in the Order of Communion of 1548 and in the Reformed Prayer Book of 1549.

The
Second
Prayer
Book.

Three years later, in 1552, even this kindly consideration for "them that do use to their further satisfying the Auricular and secret Confession to the Priest," disappeared. The very word *confess* was struck out, and the expression "*open his grief*" was allowed alone to remain in the place of "*confess and open his grief secretly*"; while in place of the words "*that of us as of the Ministers of God and of the Church he may receive comfort and absolution,*" the following words were substituted, "*that by the ministry of God's Word he may receive comfort and the benefit of absolution.*" The whole passage runs as follows:—

And because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion but with a full trust in God's mercy and with a quiet conscience : therefore, *if there be any of you which by the means aforesaid cannot quiet his own conscience, but requireth further comfort or counsel*, then let him come to me, or some other discreet and learned Minister of God's word, and open his grief that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice, and comfort as his conscience may be relieved : and that by the Ministry of God's Word he may receive comfort and the benefit of absolution, to the quieting of his conscience and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.

And it is of the highest importance, as a matter of history, to notice that this same Prayer Book of 1552, which contained these changes, added the opening passages of Scripture and the public Confession and Absolution¹ at the beginning of Morning and Evening Prayer. As to the significance of that introduction, and of the wording adopted for the daily "Absolution," I should like to quote an authority whose words will carry weight. Archdeacon Freeman, in his *Principles of Divine Service*,² says "The reason probably was that the compilers desired to give to the public daily Absolution that form which would most completely adapt it for superseding, in all ordinary cases, private Confession and Absolution."

The existing Exhortation in the Communion Office of our Prayer Book does not substantially differ, so

¹ For Bishop Andrewes' view as to the authoritative character of this Form, see *Minor Works, Lib. A.C.L.*, p. 148. See also an important historical note in Blunt's *Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, p. 4.

² Vol. i., page 315.

far as the paragraph in question is concerned, from the Exhortation of 1552.

The Visitation of the Sick.

Turn from the Office for Holy Communion to the Office for the Visitation of the Sick. In 1549 the words were as follows :—

Here shall the sick person make a special Confession if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which Confession the Priest shall absolve him after this form ; and the same form of Absolution shall be used in all Private Confessions.

In 1552 this reference to Private Confession, apart from its use for the Sick, disappears, the other words remaining as before.¹

From 1662 onwards the words, as we all know, have stood thus :—

Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which Confession the Priest shall absolve him, if he humbly and heartily desire it, after this sort.

It ought, I think, to be noted, whatever deduction may follow, that according to Canon lxvii of 1603, the prescribed Order is specially for the use of those Clergy who are not licensed as Preachers—presumably the less learned. “When any person is dangerously sick in any parish, the Minister or Curate . . . shall resort unto him or her . . . to instruct and comfort them in their distress, according to the Order of the Com-

¹ Only that “after this form” becomes “after this sort,” a difference to which some have attached importance. See *e.g.* Scudamore’s *Notitia Eucharistica*. Second Ed., p. 468.

munion Book if he be no Preacher, or, if he be a Preacher, then as he shall think most needful and convenient.”

One other of the Canons of 1603 requires notice. Canons cix to cxii call upon the Churchwardens and Sidesmen to present to the Ordinary notorious offenders of different kinds. Canon cxiii bids the Clergy undertake this unpleasant task if they find their lay colleagues negligent to do it. It adds, however, for the protection of the Clergy :—

Canon
cxiii. of
1603.

Provided always, that if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the Minister, for the unburdening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him, we do not any way bind the said Minister by this our constitution, but do straitly charge and admonish him, that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy (except they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called into question for concealing the same) under pain of irregularity.

The quotations which I have made, include, I believe, all the references to this difficult matter which are to be found in what can properly be called our official formularies.¹ Suppose we had nothing else

This
evidence
from the
formu-
laries

¹ As further evidence of the change of view, I ought perhaps to quote the words of the semi-official *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*, published in 1571.

“Itaque si quis ex illis qui se ad Domini mensam præparant in aliqua religionis parte vacillet, aut conscientia sauciatus fit, liberum aditum ad ministrum habeat, et ab illo consolationem et levationem cogritudinis capiat, et, si plene se ministro probaverit, crimine, si opus fuerit solvatur.” *De Div. Off.*, cap. vii.

to guide us, it would, I think, be difficult for any man, reading them consecutively, thoughtfully, and without bias, to deny or doubt that, while they decisively assert and protect the special or occasional use—the medicinal use, as it has been wisely called—of Auricular Confession, they betoken a distrust and a growing discouragement of its habitual or ordinary use in the pastoral ministry of the Church.

It is wholly insufficient to say that what happened at the Reformation was that the use of Private Confession, hitherto compulsory, became voluntary. The formularies, even if they stood by themselves, would convey more than that. But they do not stand by themselves; and, wearisomely familiar as, I fear, the subject is to many of us, I ask you to let me put on record yet again some of the evidence of what was said and thought and taught about it in those eventful years.

is confirmed in other ways.

It is, to my mind, strange that we do not hear even more than we do about the popular attitude in the Sixteenth Century towards this memorable change. I doubt whether any other among the Reformation changes can have affected the ordinary life of English men, women, and children so much as this. It must have been, it clearly was, a change effected by degrees. It was not among the earlier changes in doctrine or practice either in England or on the Continent. But by examining consecutively the "Articles" set out by the Convocation, and published by the King's authority in 1536; ¹ "The Institution of a Christian Man," published

¹ See *Formularies of Faith during the Reign of Henry VIII.* (Oxford, 1825), p. 10.

in the following year, and known as the "Bishops' Book;"¹ and "The Erudition of a Christian Man," or "King's Book," published in 1543,² we can trace the different language which was coming into use on the subject for some years before the publication of the "Order of Communion" in 1548, a quotation from which I have already given.

King Edward's Injunctions of 1547, the year preceding the publication of that "Order of Communion," contain the following among the "Articles to be inquired in the King's Majesty's Visitation":

Item, whether Parsons, Vicars and Curates have every Lent required their parishioners *in their Confession* to recite their Pater-noster, the Articles of our Faith, and the Ten Commandments in English.³

And Archbishop Cranmer, accordingly, in his Diocesan Articles of Enquiry in the same year, asks his Clergy:

Item, whether every Lent they examine *such persons as come to Confession to them* whether they can recite the Pater-noster, the Articles of our Faith, and the Ten Commandments in English.⁴

But already it seems clear that all requirement of Confession as a necessary preliminary to Communion was practically at an end. No reference to Confession will be found in the Articles on "the Sacrament of the Altar," either in the "Bishops' Book" or in the

¹ See *Formularies of Faith during the Reign of Henry VIII.* (Oxford, 1825), p. 98.

² *Ib.*, p. 261.

³ *Cardwell. Documentary Annals*, p. i., 26.

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 51.

“King’s Book,” although the need and manner of due preparation beforehand is set forth in both.

From this time onward there has existed within our Church, sometimes in a more, sometimes in a less, acute or outspoken form, a wide difference of opinion as to the utility, and even the orthodoxy, of resort to Auricular Confession.

Danger of
isolated
quotations.

It would be easy to multiply examples. I have collected abundant references for those who have access to books and who will use their opportunities.¹ One thing I venture to urge upon all who study this subject. Before you rely upon any quoted extract, read the whole passage from which it is taken. It is not easy to understand the blindness or the carelessness (I hope we may so call it) with which some present day controversialists have quoted, on one side or the other, short paragraphs which appear to support their views, torn from a context which gives, when taken as a whole, the very opposite impression.

This difficulty, always real, has a special force with respect to the particular subject we are discussing. The arguments used and the statements made by our great Anglican Divines about Auricular Confession are usually part of a deliberate reply to the criticism of Puritan or Romanist opponents, and it is therefore essential that we should know to what misrepresentation the reply is being directed before we can adequately estimate its weight and meaning as a positive and independent statement.

It is because I fear myself to give a false idea of

¹ See Appendix A.

the drift of any passage that I refrain from presenting what has so often been given on either side, a marshalled array of such isolated little paragraphs. He who is honestly striving to arrive at the true mind of the Church of England will not grudge the pains required for the study not of such quotations only, but of their several contexts.

Two authorities, and two only, I will quote to-day.

The
Homilies.

First, from the "Second Book of Homilies." The volume is, of course, of secondary, not primary, authority in the Church; but it affords indisputable evidence as to the general teaching inculcated by authority at the time of its publication in 1563 "to be read in Churches by the Ministers diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood by the people."¹

We are all bound to the general statement in our thirty-fifth Article that "the Second Book of Homilies doth contain a godly and wholesome doctrine," but it would be going much beyond this to say that the Church of England has formally adopted every statement or opinion to be found therein.²

In the Second Homily on Repentance, the author, whether Bishop Jewel or another, after describing the "first part of Repentance" as "the contrition of the heart," and the "second part" as "an unfeigned confession and acknowledgment of our sins unto God. . . .

¹ Article xxxv. See also *Parker Correspondence*. Letter to Cecil, No. cxxxi., p. 177.

² For a reference to the authority attaching to the Homilies see the Judgment of Sir H. Jenner in the Court of Arches, 12 Dec., 1838. (*Brecks v. Woolfrey*, 1 Curt. 880, at p. 901.)

for without this confession sin is not forgiven," proceeds thus :—

This is then the chiefest and most principal confession that in the Scriptures and the Word of God we are bidden to make, and without the which we shall never obtain pardon and forgiveness of our sins. Indeed, besides this there is another kind of confession, which is needful and necessary.

And of the same doth St. James speak after this manner, saying, "Acknowledge your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be saved." As if we should say, Open that which grieveth you that a remedy may be found. And this is commanded both for him that complaineth, and for him that heareth, that the one should show his grief to the other. The true meaning of it is, that the faithful ought to acknowledge their offences, whereby some hatred, rancour, grudge, or malice, have risen or grown among them one to another, that a brotherly reconciliation may be had, without the which nothing that we can do can be acceptable unto God. . . . And whereas the adversaries go about to wrest this place, for to maintain their Auricular Confession withal, they are greatly deceived themselves, and do shamefully deceive others; for if this text ought to be understood of Auricular Confession, then the Priests are as much bound to confess themselves unto the lay-people, as the lay-people are bound to confess themselves to them. And if to pray is to absolve, then the laity by this place hath as great authority to absolve the Priests, as the Priests have to absolve the laity And where that they do allege this saying of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, unto the leper, to prove Auricular Confession to stand on God's word, "Go thy way, and show thyself unto the priest," do they not see that the leper was cleansed from his leprosy afore he was by Christ sent unto the priest, for to show himself unto him? By the same reason we must be cleansed from our spiritual leprosy, I mean our sins must be forgiven us, afore that we come to confession.

What need we then to tell forth our sins unto the ear of the Priest, sith that they be already taken away? Therefore holy Ambrose, in his second sermon upon the hundred and nineteenth Psalm, doth say full well, "Go show thyself unto the priest." Who is the true priest, but He which is the Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech? Whereby this holy father doth understand that, both the priesthood and the law being changed, we ought to acknowledge none other Priest for deliverance from our sins, but our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who, being our sovereign Bishop, doth with the sacrifice of His body and blood, offered once for ever upon the altar of the Cross, most effectually cleanse the spiritual leprosy and wash away the sins of all those that with true confession of the same do flee unto Him. It is most evident and plain that this Auricular Confession hath not his warrant of God's word. . . . Let us with fear and trembling, and with a true contrite heart, use that kind of confession that God doth command in His word, and then, doubtless, as He is faithful and righteous, He will forgive us our sins, and make us clean from all wickedness. I do not say, but that, if any do find themselves troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned Curate or Pastor, or to some other godly, learned man, and show the trouble and doubt of their conscience to them, that they may receive at their hands the comfortable salve of God's word; but it is against the true Christian liberty that any man should be bound to the mentioning of his sins, as it hath been used heretofore in the time of blindness and ignorance.

The second full quotation to which I bespeak your attention is drawn from the Sixth Book (so-called¹) of

Richard
Hooker.

¹ The almost certain fact that the chapters from which I quote formed no original part of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, but were accidentally or mistakenly placed where they stand, is immaterial to the present purpose, as there is no question of

Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Hooker's undisputed position in English theological literature justifies his being placed in a niche by himself. He is so placed by the consent of all. Mr. Keble has eloquently pointed out¹ how "the character and views of Hooker mark him as one especially raised up to be the chief human instrument in the salutary interference which Divine Providence was then preparing." Dean Church writes of him in similar terms²; and his latest editor, Dean Paget, while not blind to what he regards as defects in Hooker's argument, points out his fitness above other men to be the guide and teacher of our Church to-day. "The problems," he says,³ "of this last decade of the Nineteenth Century are widely different from those which agitated most men's thoughts in the corresponding years of the Sixteenth; but again and again it seems as though men now might see things more justly and more hopefully, in a clearer light, and with less disproportion, if they could look at them in Hooker's way, from his standpoint and with his temper." And again:⁴—"It seems true to say that the Church of England need not be ashamed to reckon Hooker not only with the foremost of those who have upheld its cause and delineated its position, but also as one of those who have

their authenticity as Hooker's handiwork. See Keble's Introduction, Vol. i, p. xxx.

¹ Editor's Preface to Hooker's Works, p. lii.

² Introduction to Book I of *Ecclesiastical Polity*, p. xix.

³ Introduction to Hooker, Book V, p. 5.

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 228.

most justly shown among men its distinctive mind and character.”

I remind you of these testimonies in order to justify myself in asking you to listen to the words of Hooker above the words of other men. Here, then, are some paragraphs from what Hooker says upon the special points at issue.

To conclude, we everywhere find the use of Confession, especially public, allowed of and commended by the Fathers ; but that extreme and rigorous necessity of Auricular and Private Confession, which is at this day so mightily upheld by the Church of Rome, we find not. It was not then the faith and doctrine of God’s Church, as of the Papacy at this present, 1. That the only remedy for sin after baptism is Sacramental Penitency : 2. That Confession in secret is an essential part thereof : 3. That God himself cannot now forgive sins without the Priest : 4. That because forgiveness at the hands of the Priest must arise from Confession in the offender, therefore to confess unto him is a matter of such necessity, as being not either in deed, or at the least in desire performed, excludeth utterly from all pardon, and must consequently in Scripture be commanded, wheresoever any promise of forgiveness is made. No, no ; these opinions have youth in their countenance ; antiquity knoweth them not, it never thought nor dreamed of them.¹

Again :

It standeth with us in the Church of England, as touching Public Confession, thus :

First, seeing day by day we, in our Church, begin our public prayers to Almighty God with public acknowledgment of our

¹ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book VI, Cap. IV, 13.

sins, in which Confession every man prostrate as it were before His Glorious Majesty crieth guilty against himself; and the Minister with one sentence pronounceth universally all clear whose acknowledgment so made hath proceeded from a true penitent mind; what reason is there every man should not under the general terms of Confession represent to himself his own particulars whatsoever, and adjoining thereunto that affection which a contrite spirit worketh, embrace to as full effect the words of divine grace, as if the same were severally and particularly uttered with addition of prayers, imposition of hands, or all the ceremonies and solemnities which might be used for the strengthening of men's affiance in God's peculiar mercy towards them? Such complements are helps to support our weakness, and not causes that serve to procure or produce his gifts. If with us there be "truth in the inward parts," as David speaketh, the difference of general and particular forces in Confession and Absolution is not so material that any man's safety or ghostly good should depend upon it.

And for Private Confession and Absolution it standeth thus with us: The Minister's power to absolve is publicly taught and professed, the Church not denied to have authority either of abridging or enlarging the use and exercise of that power; upon the people no such necessity imposed of opening their transgressions unto men, as if remission of sins otherwise were impossible neither any such opinion had of the thing itself, as though it were either unlawful or unprofitable, saving only for these inconveniences, which the world hath, by experience, observed in it heretofore. And in regard thereof, the Church of England hitherto hath thought it the safer way to refer men's hidden crimes unto God and themselves only; howbeit, not without special caution for the admonition of such as come to the Holy Sacrament, and for the comfort of such as are ready to depart the world.¹

¹ *Ibid.* Book VI, Cap. IV, 15.

Again :

In sum, when the offence doth stand only between God and man's conscience, the counsel is good which St. Chrysostom giveth : "I wish thee not to bewray thyself, nor to accuse thyself before others. I wish thee to obey the prophet who saith, 'Disclose thy way unto the Lord, confess thy sin before Him, tell thy sins to Him that He may blot them out. . . .'"

If hereupon it follow, as it did with David, "I thought, I will confess against myself my wickedness unto Thee, O Lord, and Thou forgavest me the plague of my sin," we have then our desire, and there remaineth only thankfulness, accompanied with perpetuity of care to avoid that, which being not avoided, we cannot remedy without new perplexity and grief. Contrariwise if peace with God do not follow after the pains we have taken in seeking after it ; if we continue disquieted, and not delivered from anguish, mistrusting whether that we do be sufficient ; it argueth that our sore doth exceed the power of our own skill, and that the wisdom of the Pastor must bind up those parts, which being bruised, are not able to be cured of themselves.¹

Now it is, of course, open to any man to draw his own conclusions from these quotations, and from the many other passages to which I merely direct attention ;² and probably our conclusions as to the drift of the whole would not be unanimous. To my mind, after giving to them all the study I can, this, at the very least, seems clear. Prior to our own day, no large section of English Churchmen, during the last three hundred years, has claimed that the habitual use of Auricular Confession ought to become general,

Conclusion as to general use.

¹ *Ibid.* Book VI, Cap. IV, 16.

² See Appendix A.

or could become general without disloyalty to the principles which the Reformation either established or revived.

On the other hand, throughout that period—with the exception, perhaps, of the latter part of the eighteenth and the early part of the present centuries—there have always been among the Church's trusted leaders men who actively encouraged, both on doctrinal and practical grounds, a more full use of the special provision made by our Church for the relief of genuinely troubled souls at critical moments in their life.

It is strangely difficult to judge accurately to what extent Private Confession was in use in the period which followed the Restoration, the first decades, that is, of our existing Prayer Book. Some of the incidental evidence we possess seems to point to a more frequent recourse to it than is common nowadays, and certainly at that period there is a marked absence, among Church of England writers, of anything corresponding to the vituperative denunciations indulged in by some of the eager Sixteenth Century Protestants and very audible again in our own day.

The
Doctrinal
question.

Throughout the Reformation period the subject was discussed on doctrinal at least as often as on practical grounds. Richard Hooker, in penetrating words which repay the closest study, draws out the differences which separate our doctrine of Absolution from the doctrine of the Church of Rome as enunciated, say, in the Council of Trent. I beseech you to ponder, not only the quotation I am about to give, but the whole chapter, with diligence and prayer.

Here are the words. They have of course no binding authority, but it is difficult to exaggerate the weight which belongs to them as the deliberate judgment of such a man :

It is not to be marvelled at that so great a difference appeareth between the doctrine of Rome and ours, when we teach Repentance. They imply in the name of Repentance much more than we do. We stand chiefly upon the true inward conversion of the heart ; they more upon works of external show. We teach, above all things, that Repentance which is one and the same from the beginning to the world's end ; they a Sacramental Penance of their own devising and shaping. We labour to instruct men in such sort, that every soul which is wounded with sin may learn the way how to cure itself ; they, clean contrary, would make all sores seem incurable, unless the Priest have a hand in them.¹

Throughout these chapters, as elsewhere,² Hooker has set himself more intently to show *why* his opponents are wrong than to prove that they are so. He is not afraid of the challenge to build as well as to destroy, or of the task of replacing what he refutes by a positive construction which invites the test of a wide accumulation of facts.

But Hooker does not stand alone. No English Divine, whom I, at least, would ask you to follow, makes little of the message effectually conveyed to the soul of the sinner in the Absolution pronounced by the Minister of Christ accredited to that solemn privilege by the Church and by the Church's Lord. To enter now

¹ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book VI, Cap. VI, 2.

² See Dean Church's Introduction to Book I, p. xvi.

upon the profound and difficult subject of what is known as "the power of the keys" would be impossible. I will for the present only say that to regard the question of Private Confession as a question of practical expediency and nothing more would be to miss half its significance.

At the very root of the Reformation changes lay the principle of the direct access of the individual soul to God without human intervention of any kind, a principle which destroys the whole theory upon which the Roman Confessional had built its power. The man who holds that the Priest's Absolution is required for conveying God's pardon to the sin-stained soul will have no doubt about his duty. But he who maintains that theory has to reckon with the English Prayer Book. That Book teaches otherwise, and with no hesitating voice.

The
Church of
England's
teaching.

What the Church of England says is surely positive and clear. It might be thus paraphrased: You are conscious of your sin. Carry it to God for pardon. In the Church's daily prayers you are guided how to do this; and, that Confession over, you receive there and then in the Name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, Who died for you upon the Cross, the assurance of His pardoning grace. The pardon is yours already; you have not to wait for it or for something else. Thus pardoned and cheered, you will use for common duties the strength which He gives—gives in the daily answer to your daily prayers and in the ordered Ministry of Word and Sacrament. It may happen to you at times to have some special difficulty in some crisis of your life, or

possibly in the prospect of approaching death. At such hours the guiding power of Conscience will depend greatly upon how it has been strengthened by vigorous daily use, and by your direct personal access to the Throne of Grace. It may happen that at such a time you need other helps, and among them, perhaps, the help that can be given by the Minister of Christ, accredited to assure you of God's pardon of repented sin, and qualified by discretion and learning to counsel you aright. If such need arise, if after all your prayers and pains you cannot "quiet your own conscience therein," you are at liberty to "open your grief" in that special way, "that by the Ministry of God's Holy Word you may receive the benefit of Absolution together with ghostly counsel and advice." Once more, if, in grave sickness, after like care and prayer and pains, you still feel your "conscience troubled with some weighty matter," our Church directs that you should be even "moved" to tell it out to God's Minister who visits you, that he may give you authoritatively the message of God's forgiveness.

All this is clearly laid down, and the rules which prescribe it are our answer to those who noisily tell us that the Church of England knows no Private Confession and Absolution. She does know and value this special form of Ministry for grave and exceptional need. I am certain that Confession so used, Absolution so given, has been many a time of incalculable help to Christian men and women.

But, my brothers, realise that special and exceptional it must remain if we are to be loyal to our Church's

Its use is meant to be exceptional.

teaching, nay, if we are not to run the risk of weakening the very characters which we long to strengthen and upbuild. Realise, I beseech you, the peril attaching to such teaching as may lead people back by degrees into regarding habitual Auricular Confession as an ordinary and almost a necessary part of their devotional life. The subject is so grave that I seek for words weightier than my own. On such a matter it is natural to turn for leadership and counsel to the Primate's Chair. Let me quote a sentence or two first from Archbishop Benson and then from Archbishop Temple. Each speaks in his own characteristic way. Archbishop Benson, after a graphic description of the origin in mediæval days of "the yoke, the terror, the deceivableness of Technical Confession," "the fruit of the despair which marked the Ninth Century," goes on thus:—

Archbishop Benson.

Even from the first it was less difficult with women than with men; but it was strongly worked by strong wills and great abilities, and it answered its purpose. But so soon as the first age of modern civilisation succeeded to that of the Middle Ages, its retention was only parallel to the retention of Latin in the Church offices after the maturity of a great family of languages. Then, as a system for society, it broke down. It has broken the Church down with it. The masculine lay intellect may be by various causes accidentally diverted for a while from the generally necessary study of Christian Truth. That will come right with discussion; but as to the Confessional—the Culture, the Philosophy, the Science, the Family Union, the Civil Progress that Christendom has brought forth, all alike exclaim—

In nostros fabricata est machina muros.

If the office of the Christian Priest be really to help the “building of Society” upon lines laid down in human nature itself by the hand of God, cleared and supplied with labour and with materials by the life and works of Christ, the Confessional is no building implement for the architect of to-day.¹

Turn from the words of him “who, being dead, yet speaketh,” to the different but not less weighty utterance of his successor in the Primacy. Speaking of the rigid system of the Mediæval Church (the system, as it seems to me, to which, perhaps without meaning it, some Parish Priests are tending to lead their people back), Archbishop Temple says :—

The objection to such a system is not very difficult to trace. The first, and perhaps the greatest, is the want of freedom. Man is not made to be the better for being so much looked after. To kill all spontaneous moral action by putting every act, and word, and thought under rigid control from without may produce a better accumulation of good deeds, but it lessens the vital force of the good deeds themselves. The man is no longer trained in seeking what is excellent, and in endeavouring to practise it, but in obeying good rules made by some one else. The life may in a certain sense be better, but the man himself is not. The good deeds cease to be his good deeds. The fight with evil that goes on within him is no longer really his fight. The system carries the man back to Judaism. The Law judges a man by what he does, but the Gospel by what he is. “Do justice,” says the Law ; “Be just,” says the Gospel ; and the system of the Confessional follows the rule of the Law, and does not encourage the spirit of the Gospel.¹

Arch-
bishop
Temple.

¹ *The Seven Gifts*, p. 94.

¹ *Primary Charge*, p. 20.

No one in our Church, I imagine, would avow or believe himself to be supporting the system as here described. But it is my firm belief that the man who encourages the habitual use of Confession by people whose circumstances are in no reasonable sense exceptional is leading them inevitably to this abuse of the system. What Archbishop Benson calls its "deceivableness" is one of its most certain dangers.

I am of course well aware that, in theory at least, formal "direction" is no essential part of the system of Auricular Confession. But experience seems to have shown—what indeed was to be expected—the practical impossibility of keeping the two apart; and it is this which is largely responsible for the danger just alluded to, the danger of the conscience losing something of its proper robustness, something of its power of reticent and independent action. I speak not from hearsay, still less from a mere theory of what is likely, but from personal knowledge and observation.

No doubt we must be prepared for exceptional cases. As there are exceptional occasions in individual life, so there are exceptional people in the Christian society; men or women whose peculiar temperament, or the nature of whose temptations or surroundings or duties, suggests, or even necessitates, for a time at least, exceptional modes of help. I am not attempting the impossible task of defining where, in such cases, the line ought to be drawn. I have tried, by study of the history of the Confessional and its use both past and present—and above all by close intercourse and discussion with some of those whose personal experience as

Confessors has been largest—to form a judgment on the whole subject which shall be neither careless nor prejudiced nor uninformed; and after quiet and anxious thought and prayer I feel it to be my duty solemnly, as your Bishop, to exhort you to beware of the insidious growth of a usage fraught, as I believe, with much that is perilous to the healthy and robust development of the Christian life.

At the same time, while speaking of these perils, I desire to dissociate myself absolutely from the ignorant or fanatical outcry about impurity and suggestions of evil, which some people believe to be inseparable from the Confessional even in England. That such things are inconceivable, either in this or any other system of private counsel and advice, none would dare to say; but the wholesale insinuations thus ignorantly or fanatically brought against the Clergy who hear habitual Confessions hardly merit a reply.

It remains to mention a few points on which there can be no doubt or hesitation at all.

Anything that savours of compulsion is not merely to be discouraged; it is definitely and peremptorily forbidden. And compulsion means not only the quasi-legal compulsion of the Church of Rome, but any such pressure or teaching, especially among the young, as shall lead them to regard Confession as one of the religious duties essential to the higher Christian life. Twice since I was a Bishop have cases been brought to my notice of such virtual compulsion—or of what to the tender and teachable spirit of a young girl amounts to compulsion—in connexion with

There
must be no
compul-
sion in any
form.

admission in one case to Confirmation, in the other to Holy Communion. I acted in each instance within forty-eight hours. If any such case is hereafter brought before me, I shall deal with it summarily and, if necessary, publicly. It is a gross violation of our Church's rule, and merits, if substantiated, stern reprobation and even punishment.

The
Prayer
Book
sanction
does not
cover the
case of
children.

In the next place, I fail to understand how the actual provisions of the Prayer Book can be made, even by the widest stretch, to include the case of children in good health who have not yet been confirmed. The provision in the Communion Service is for the benefit of a person qualified to receive the Holy Sacrament, and kept back by inability, after full thought and prayer, to quiet his own conscience. Beware then lest any be led to strain these rules to breaking point. The Council of Trent prescribes the duty of Auricular Confession as binding from a very tender age, as soon indeed as the child is old enough to have any real consciousness of sin¹; and a certain anonymous and most mischievous little Catechism, said to have obtained some circulation in the Church of England, appears to take that as its guide. But our formularies give no such sanction, and, as the Bishop of Oxford has truly said,² "The Prayer Book cannot honestly be pressed into the argument for making Confession a part of the discipline of the unconfirmed, or of preparation for Confirmation."

One more point. It cannot be right that the anxious and responsible duty of dealing with exceptional cases

¹ *Catechismus Conc. Trid.*, Pars. II, Cap. viii.

² *Fourth Visitation Charge*, 1899, p. 34.

when they arise should fall upon those who have only recently received Priests' Orders. May I express to every Rector or Vicar who hears me, or who reads these words, my earnest hope that he will not permit, still less encourage, his younger brethren in the Ministry to undertake this difficult office, but will require that those who seek for such treatment be referred to him on whose shoulders has been solemnly laid the cure of souls within the Parish. To most of those who have been admitted by me to Priests' Orders I have myself laid this clearly down, and my direction has, I think, in every single case been welcomed. I wish to extend the direction to others who, while still young and inexperienced, have come into our Diocese from elsewhere. The necessary qualifications will be theirs in time.¹

Young Priests should not hear Confessions.

You will not, I am sure, suppose that I am afraid of the fullest possible confidence between Pastor and people. I sometimes think our present controversies are tending to diminish that confidence, and that the more frequent demand for "confessional" aid is an outcome of the loss of what was customary a little while ago. The unhappy diminution of systematic pastoral visitation has much to answer for.

Need of close pastoral intercourse.

We have dwelt to-day upon Prayer Book rules and rubrics, as well as upon the principles which underlie them. Now let any man read carefully the rubrics prefixed to the office of Holy Communion, and judge whether they do not expect and even enjoin a very

¹ For fuller counsel on this point I may refer to the Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop of York, Advent, 1898, p. 31.

intimate knowledge by the Parish Priest of the lives of those to whom he is set to minister. All Christian communities, and certainly not least the most Protestant sects in England, have regarded some form or other of outspoken intercourse on spiritual matters to be wholesome and even necessary to real progress. If our ministry, even in the pulpit, is to be adequately fulfilled, we must know the facts and needs around us. And, further, let us never forget that to teach our people to rely exclusively or mainly upon the personal confession made by the individual soul to God carries with it the obligation to teach them to see to it that that confession to God is both painstaking and regular, and that it pierces deep. Thus only can the sinner come to know his sin. Thus only can the soul's life be nourished. Thus only can we "go from strength to strength."

The
subject
concerns
all.

My Reverend Brethren, I have said what I had to say upon this important subject. I am well aware that the questions at issue affect only a small minority of those whom I address, and that the larger number find no difficulty whatever in complying with the provisions of the Prayer Book as I have tried to interpret them to-day. But "Private Confession" is "in the air," and thus concerns us all, both from its intrinsic importance and from its bearing upon the position, the teaching, and the usages of the Church of England. I have, of course, only repeated what has been often said before, within the last half century, by those responsible in their degree for the government of our Church. Twenty-six years have passed since the Bishops of this Province put forth

unanimously a statement upon the subject, the handiwork mainly of Bishop Wilberforce, Bishop Moberly and Bishop Christopher Wordsworth. That document, in somewhat shorter form, was adopted five years later with almost absolute unanimity¹ by the Second Lambeth Conference, attended by a hundred Bishops from every part of our Communion. I reprint the paragraphs for your careful consideration.² It is exactly upon the lines there laid down that I have tried to speak to you to-day.

Believe me, I appreciate to the full the indisputable fact that many of the difficulties which beset us in this matter are difficulties which arise from that whole-hearted eagerness to help sick or perishing souls which makes enthusiastic workers adopt or devise every method old and new so that they may "by all means save some." If I have seemed for a moment to misread that motive or to underrate that zeal, know now that nothing could be further from my thoughts. But those on whom is laid the burden of high office are bound, beyond other men, to scan and estimate by the help of God the consequences, direct and indirect, distant as well as near, to which our policy and our acts may lead. It is the part of a Bishop to give warning of the unsuspected strength of dangerous currents or the proximity of hidden rocks. On each Bishop's Conse-

A Bishop's
duty to
warn and
guide.

¹ Three Bishops, and three only, took exception to the word "encourage" in a single clause. On every other clause the Conference was unanimous.

² See Appendix A.

cration day you have asked for him God's enabling Grace that he may speak boldly as he ought to speak. It is his duty, God helping him, to give such guidance as shall make our message to men what Christ would have it be. The one desire of us all is to follow the actual example of Our Blessed Lord Himself in His dealing with the distressed and the anxious and the sad. He taught us the wisdom and the gain, not always of removing difficulties even if we can, but of suggesting principles of action, sowing seeds which are to sprout and grow, supplanting helplessness by self-discipline and self-reliance ; replacing timidity and shame by the quietness and confidence which come from God.¹ The wisest human counsellor is he who leads the sinner to need human counsel less.

¹ See *e.g.*, S. Matt. xix. 16-22 ; S. Luke v. 17-26. vii. 36-50 ; S. John iv. 15-30 ; v. 14 ; viii. 1-11, &c.

THE HOLY COMMUNION.

OF the changes made at the Reformation in the doctrine and usages of the Church of England, incomparably the most important were those which concerned the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion. It is possible that other changes, such as the free circulation of the English Bible, or the substitution of English for Latin in the public Services, or the comparative disuse of Private Confession, may at first in the eyes of the unlearned people have seemed even more notable. But the principles which underlay those changes, important as they are, were less vital than those which to the vulgar eye, and in the significant vernacular phraseology, "turned the Mass into a Communion."¹

Changes
made in
the Com-
munion
Office at
the Re-
formation,

It would be impossible to deal with this great subject exhaustively, or even quite accurately, without a much more profound discussion of the whole Eucharistic doc-

¹ It will not be supposed that I am adopting this phrase, or regarding it as adequately expressing what took place. But in a rough way it gave utterance to a truth. For the origin or early use of the phrase, see *Strype's Cranmer*, vol. i., p. 311. Ed. 1848.

trine than is within our reach to-day. My aim is less ambitious. I ask you merely to trace with me, in bare but, I hope, true outline, what happened at the English Reformation with regard to a few marked characteristics of our own rite. Observe closely the particular changes then introduced. Were they accidental or deliberate? Were they merely the outcome and expression of some passing phase of controversy, or were they part of a well-reasoned and thoughtful course of action, approved as years went on by such fathers and leaders of our Church as we all delight to honour? We shall thus be in a position to judge whether at the present hour we are any of us liable inadvertently, forgetfully, or mistakenly to be disloyal, even in small matters, to what is deliberately distinctive of our Church of England.

What, then, speaking generally and omitting unimportant details, were the principal differences between a Celebration of Holy Communion in the reign of Charles II. and the corresponding Service in the reign of Henry VIII? Or if you will pardon me for putting it in such a form, what contrasts would have been apparent to Sir Thomas More if he could have returned from the unseen world to be present at a Celebration of Holy Communion, say, by Bishop Morley, in Winchester Cathedral?

Primarily, and most obviously, four: the Service was said in English, not in Latin: it was simplified in many of the accompaniments which strike the eye: it was a general Communion of the people: and lastly, the Office itself was altered and re-arranged.

This last point requires more careful statement. Not to speak of minor matters, the large and manifest changes were mainly these: the ministrations of the Cup to the laity; the omission of all mention by name of Angels, Saints, and departed persons; and the introduction of many new provisions, notably, the Commandments and their responses, the offering of the Alms upon the Holy Table, the Comfortable Words, the post-Communion thanksgiving Collect, and the Benediction. Besides these self-evident changes, there was of course throughout the Service such a modification of language and ritual with regard to the Consecrated Elements as to give a somewhat different colour and tone to the whole.

It is most difficult to summarise in a few sentences the changes then made. But no one who will take the trouble to transcribe in full the two Services, side by side, and to mark their points of difference, can be left in doubt as to the principles upon which the compilers of our Prayer Book acted. These principles may be reduced, I think, to three. The Reformers set themselves:

I. To restore the original idea of Communion as an essential part of the Sacramental rite.

II. To provide that everything done or said should be visible and easy to be understood by all.

III. To remove sternly whatever had been found by experience to lead to superstition or to a materialistic view of the Sacrament.

Three
principles
on which
the
changes
rested.

In all these respects the changes made were a return

to the Scriptural and primitive idea of the Eucharistic Service as contrasted with its mediæval developments. Examine this with me a little more closely.

I.

Restoration of
People's
Communion.

First, with regard to the dignity and duty of Communion as such. It is, I suppose, difficult for us to realise the extent to which this had passed out of view in the days preceding the Reformation. "Up to 1548," says the Bishop of Salisbury in his valuable volume on *The Holy Communion*,¹ "the custom had been for the Priest to celebrate and communicate daily, but for the people to communicate only once a year, at Easter ; and usually, it would seem, after or apart from the Mass in which the Priest had communicated." A reader of some of the books and primers on the Mass, issued in the reign of Henry VIII., finds nothing to suggest that any act of Communion on the part of the people was even contemplated. So thoroughly had this theory and custom of "Solitary Masses" been popularised that, as you will remember, the "Devon Rebels," in their petition against the Prayer Book of 1549, allege the change made in this matter as one of their special grievances : "We will have the Mass in Latin, as was before, and celebrated by the Priest, without any man or woman communi-

¹ Page 222, Second Ed., 1893 (Longmans). I commend this book very cordially to those who desire to possess in a compendious and convenient form a thoughtful and scholarly treatise on the subject, together with useful advice upon practical details.

cating with him," and, "We will have the Sacrament of the Altar but at Easter delivered to the lay people, and then but in one kind."¹

It would be foreign to our purpose to investigate historically to-day the growth during mediæval times of this strange perversion of the original idea. The question is discussed with abundant wealth of learning in the second chapter of Scudamore's interesting and conclusive *Essay on the Communion of the Laity*,² to which it is a pleasure to refer you. Mr. Scudamore shows³ that so early as the Sixth Century people began to be taught "that a special benefit attended the *hearing* of Mass by those who did not communicate; and that a less careful preparation (if any), was needed for that than for the actual reception of the Sacrament."

Pre-Reformation use.

In 813 the Third Council of Tours ordained that the laity should "communicate if not more frequently, at least thrice in the year."⁴

In England at the beginning of the Eleventh Century the Council, lay and clerical, held at Eanham decreed thus:—"Let every one who will understand his own need also prepare himself to go to housel at least thrice in the year so as it is requisite for him."⁵

The Fourth Lateran Council, held under Innocent III. in 1215, in the same Canon which enforces the obliga-

¹ See Cranmer's Works, vol. i., pp. 169-173; Park. Soc.

² Rivingtons, 1855.

³ Page 81.

⁴ Ut, si non frequentius, vel ter laici homines in anno communicent, nisi forte quis majoribus quibuslibet criminibus impediatur. *Canon 50. Labbé. T. xiv., col. 91.*

⁵ Johnson's *English Canons* (Ang.-Cath. Lib.), p. 487.

tion of Confession, enjoins but one reception of the Holy Communion in the year, at Easter. The words are these :—

Every one of the faithful of either sex . . . shall be careful to discharge, to the utmost of his power, the penance enjoined upon him, receiving reverently at Easter, at the least, the Sacrament of the Eucharist, . . . on pain of being debarred entry of the Church during life and Christian burial after death.¹

The general practice seems thenceforward to have been thus determined. The prescribed minimum was adopted as the rule, and Communion on the part of laymen at any other time than Easter became most infrequent.² Ecclesiastical ingenuity set to work to defend or explain by artificial means this strange departure from scriptural and primitive rule.

“All Christendom,” says St. Vincent Ferrer,³ “is one body, united by faith and charity, having many members. The

¹ Omnis utriusque sexus fidelis . . . injunctam sibi pœnitentiam studeat pro viribus adimplere, suscipiens reverenter ad minus in Pascha Eucharistiæ Sacramentum, . . . alioquin et vivens ab ingressu Ecclesiæ arceatur, et moriens Christiana careat sepultura. *Ex lib. v. Decretalium, Tit. xxxviii. De Pœnit. et Remiss. cap. xii.*

² But not unknown. See references in Bishop Wordsworth's *The Holy Communion*, p. 224.

³ Tota Christianitas est unum corpus fide et charitate conjunctum habens multa membra. Sacerdos est os hujus corporis. Cumque Sacerdos communicat, omnia membra reficiuntur. *Sermones ii. In Epiph. Domini. Nürnberg, 1492.*

Priest is the mouth of the body. When therefore the Priest communicates, all the members are refreshed."

"The Priest who communicates daily," says another, "is a member of the Church. Therefore all members of the Church eat that bread daily."¹

Erasmus throws upon the laity the blame for this gross abuse.

"There be some," he says, "who ask for a Communion in the Mass. So, I admit, was it ordained of Christ, and so was it wont of old to be ordained. But it is not the Priests who stand in the way of a return to this practice, but the laity, in whom love, alas! hath grown too cold."²

¹ Sacerdos communicans quotidie membrum Ecclesiæ est; ideo panem illum quotidie manducant omnia membra ecclesiæ. *Sacri canonis Missæ expos. Lect. lxxii.*

² Sunt qui requirant in Missa Communionem. Sic, fateor, fuit a Christo institutum, et olim ita consuevit observari. Verum id quo minus fiat haud stat per sacerdotes, sed per laicos, in quibus heu nimium refrixit caritas. *Opp. T. v., col. 503, Lug. Bat., 1704.*

A striking parallel to this position of Erasmus is furnished in our own time by Möhler, rightly described as "one of Germany's most distinguished Roman Catholic theologians," whose "Symbolik" was characterised by D'Aubigné as "one of the most important writings produced by Rome since the time of Bossuet." I quote from the original translation by Robertson:

"For the unseemliness of the congregation no longer communicating every Sunday (as was the case in the primitive Church), and of the Priests in the Mass usually receiving alone the Body of the Lord, is not to be laid to the blame of the Church (for all the prayers in the Holy Sacrifice presuppose

Quotations could easily be multiplied. But there is no need. The facts are clear. The Council of Trent recognised the gravity of the evil, but did practically nothing. Its disapproval is expressed in the mildest terms. I quote the words.¹

The
Council
of Trent.

The most holy Synod could indeed have wished that, at every celebration of the Mass, the faithful who are present should communicate not only spiritually but also by Sacramental reception of the Eucharist, that so they might have a richer fruit of this most holy sacrifice. Notwithstanding, if this be not always done, the Synod does not therefore condemn as private and unauthorised those Masses in which the Priest alone communicates sacramentally, but it approves, nay, commends them.

For such Masses also ought to be held to be truly Communions; partly, because in them the people communicate spiritually; partly, because they are celebrated by the public minister of the Church, not for himself alone, but for all the faithful who belong to the body of Christ.

the Sacramental Communion of the entire congregation), but is to be ascribed solely to the tepidity of the greater part of the faithful. Yet are the latter earnestly exhorted to participate, at least spiritually, in the communion of the Priest, and in this way to enter into the fellowship of Christ." Möhler, "*Symbolism*," trans. by Robertson, ed. 1843, vol. i, p. 343.

¹ *Sessio XXII*, caput vi.

Optaret quidem sacrosancta Synodus ut in singulis Missis fideles adstantes non solum spirituali affectu sed Sacramentali etiam Eucharistiæ perceptione communicarent, quo ad eos sanctissimi hujus sacrificii fructus uberior proveniret: nec tamen, si id non semper fiat, propterea Missas illas, in quibus

Very different from this halting counsel was the line taken by the English Reformers. From the outset they set themselves to restore the idea of Communion as of the very essence of the Service. This involved a sweeping change in the ordinary invitation and admission of the laity to Communion. We might have expected it to have been brought about gradually. But it was not so. On November 30th, 1547, Convocation agreed that the Communion should be administered in both kinds, and an Act of Parliament was immediately passed¹ to give effect to this proposal, and to make the admission of the laity to the Holy Communion general, occasion being at the same time taken to denounce and forbid, under severe penalty, the profane talk and, as it was called, the 'reviling' of the Mass, which had been spreading under the influence of heated sectaries from abroad.

The
English
Reform-
ers.

The whole Act is important for our purpose to-day, as showing in unmistakable terms the purpose and gist of the English Reformation in this its first stage of doctrinal and liturgical endeavour. It insists upon Reform, and explains its meaning, but sternly checks the extravagance of Puritan or Continental Reformers.

Act of
Dec.,
1547.

solus Sacerdos sacramentaliter communicat, ut privatas et illicitas damnat, sed probat atque adeo commendat.

Siquidem illæ quoque Missæ vere communes censeri debent ; partim, quod in eis populus spiritualiter communicet ; partim vero, quod a publico Ecclesiæ ministro non pro se tantum, sed pro omnibus fidelibus qui ad corpus Christi pertinent, celebrentur.

¹ December 20, 1547.

The phraseology is strangely unlike what we are now accustomed to in Acts of Parliament :

The King's most excellent majesty, minding the governance and order of his most loving subjects to be in most perfect unity and concord in all things, and in especial in the true faith and religion of God, . . . yet considers and perceives that in a multitude all be not on that sort, that reason and the knowledge of their duties can move them from offence, but many which had need have some bridle of fear, and that the same be men most contentious and arrogant for the most part, or else most blind and ignorant ; by the means of which sort of men, many things well and godly instituted, and to the edification of many, be perverted and abused, and turned to their own and others' great loss and hindrance, and sometime to extreme destruction, the which does appear in nothing more or sooner than in matters of religion, and in the great and high mysteries thereof, as in the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, commonly called the Sacrament of the Altar, and in Scripture the Supper and Table of the Lord, the communion and partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Which Sacrament was instituted of no less author than of our Saviour, both God and man, when, at His last Supper amongst His Apostles, He did take the bread into His holy hands, and did say : "Take you and eat, this is My Body, which is given and broken for you." And taking up the chalice or cup, did give thanks and say : "This is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins," that whensoever we should do the same, we should do it in the remembrance of Him, and to declare and set forth His death and most glorious passion until His coming. . . .

Yet the said Sacrament (all this notwithstanding) has been of late marvellously abused by such manner of men before

rehearsed, who of wickedness, or else of ignorance and want of learning, for certain abuses heretofore committed of some, in misusing thereof, having condemned in their hearts and speech the whole thing, and contemptuously depraved, despised, or reviled the same most holy and blessed Sacrament name or call it by such vile and unseemly words as Christian ears do abhor to hear rehearsed.

For reformation whereof be it enacted, that whatsoever person or persons shall deprave, despise, or contemn the said most blessed Sacrament, in contempt thereof, by any contemptuous words, that then he or they shall suffer imprisonment of his or their bodies, and make fine and ransom at the King's will and pleasure.

And forasmuch as it is more agreeable, both to the first institution of the said Sacrament of the most precious Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ and also more conformable to the common use and practice both of the Apostles and of the Primitive Church, by the space of five hundred years and more after Christ's Ascension, that the said blessed Sacrament should be ministered to all Christian people, under both the kinds of bread and wine, than under the form of bread only, and also it is more agreeable to the first institution of Christ, and to the usage of the Apostles and the Primitive Church, that the people being present should receive the same with the Priest, than that the Priest should receive it alone; therefore be it enacted by our said sovereign lord the King, with the consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal and the Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the said most blessed Sacrament be hereafter commonly delivered and ministered unto the people within the Church of England and Ireland, and other the King's dominions, under both the kinds, that is to say of bread and wine, except necessity otherwise require.

And also that the Priest which shall minister the same, shall, at the least one day before, exhort all persons which shall be

present likewise to resort and prepare themselves to receive the same.

And when the day prefixed comes, after a godly exhortation by the Minister made (wherein shall be further expressed the benefit and comfort promised to them which worthily receive the said holy Sacrament, and [the] danger and indignation or God threatened to them which shall presume to receive the same unworthily, to the end that every man may try and examine his own conscience before he shall receive the same), the said Minister shall not, without lawful cause, deny the same to any person that will devoutly and humbly desire it; any law, statute, ordinance or custom contrary thereunto in anywise notwithstanding; not condemning hereby the usage of any Church out of the King's majesty's dominions.

“Order of
Communion,”
1548.

A few weeks after the passing of this Act came the Royal Proclamation ordering the use of the newly prepared “Order of the Communion” in English. This Order for the people's Communion was strangely enough to be interpolated in the Latin Mass, its English Exhortation following “immediately after that the Priest himself hath received the Sacrament without the varying of any other rite or ceremony in the Mass.” Nothing, surely, could have been better devised to fix the minds of an unlearned congregation upon the significance of the change than the sudden sound of a plain English Exhortation in the midst of the old Latin Office. After the first Exhortation is the following rubric:—

Here the Priest shall pause a while to see if any man will withdraw himself, and if he perceive any so to do, then let him commune with him privily at convenient leisure, and see whether he can with good exhortation bring him to grace.

It may be well here to point out the steps taken in the successive Prayer Books to instruct the people in their new duty of habitual Communion.

The Rubrics are as explicit as it was possible to make them. In the First Prayer Book of Edward, one year after the "Order of Communion," and while the new custom was still unfamiliar, the direction ran as follows:

First
Prayer
Book.

That the receiving of the Sacrament of the blessed Body and Blood of Christ may be most agreeable to the institution thereof and to the usage of the primitive Church, in all Cathedral and Collegiate Churches there shall always some communicate with the Priest that ministereth. And that the same may be also observed everywhere abroad in the country, some one at least of that house in every Parish to whom by course, after the ordinance herein made, it appertaineth to offer for the charges of the Communion, or some other whom they shall provide to offer for them, shall receive the Holy Communion with the Priest; the which may be the better done for that they know before when their course cometh, and may therefore dispose themselves to the worthy receiving of the Sacrament. And with him or them who doth so offer the charges of the Communion, all other who be then godly disposed thereunto shall likewise receive the Communion. And by this means the Minister, having always some to communicate with him, may accordingly solemnise so high and holy mysteries with all the suffrages and due order appointed for the same. And the Priest on the week-day shall forbear to celebrate the Communion except he have some that will communicate with him.

In the Second Prayer Book, three years later, the Rubric was changed into a form almost identical with that which stands in our present Book.

Second
Prayer
Book.

And there shall be no celebration of the Lord's Supper except there be a good¹ number to communicate with the Priest, according to his discretion.

And if there be not above twenty persons in the Parish of discretion to receive the Communion, yet there shall be no Communion except four, or three at the least, communicate with the Priest. And in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches where be many Priests and Deacons they shall all receive the Communion with the Minister every Sunday at the least, except they have a reasonable cause to the contrary.

Communion of the Sick.

I do not stay to dwell upon the successive Rubrics respecting the Communion of the Sick. The imperative requirement from 1552 onwards² that, except in time of plague or contagious sickness, there shall always be others to communicate in the sick room, and that default of such fellow-communicants justifies the Curate in not celebrating the Sacrament, is deeply significant of the strength of the Reformers' feeling as to the principle which underlay the change they were effecting.

Withdrawal of Non-Communicants.

And this brings us naturally to a further question. Ought all those present at the Communion Service to communicate? Ought non-communicants to withdraw? There is no such injunction in our Prayer Book as it stands, though in King Edward's First Book it was laid down that those "that mind not to receive the Holy Communion shall depart out of the Choir," and in the Second Book the wording of the Exhortation

¹ The Rubric of 1661 substitutes "convenient" for "good."

² In the Prayer Book of 1549 fellow-communicants with the sick man are not absolutely required, but he is bidden to invite their presence, "for that shall be to him a singular great comfort, and of their parts a great token of charity."

is such as to make the presence of non-communicants throughout the Service almost impossible. This wording was retained in Queen Elizabeth's Book, and, although the change was not very speedily effected,¹ it seems to be clear that, before the final Revision in 1662, non-communicating attendance had practically ceased.²

Bishop Cosin, in a Tract written for the express purpose of giving foreigners a correct view of the doctrine and discipline of our Church, says explicitly that, after the Prayer for the Church Militant, "those who do not intend to communicate are dismissed,"³ and in his "Particulars to be considered," he urges that the Exhortations to Communion "are more fit to be read some days before the Communion than at the very same time when the people are come to receive it. For first, they that tarry for that purpose are not negligent, and they that be negligent be gone and hear it not."⁴

Similarly, Bishop Wren, in advocating the entire omission of the old Exhortation, writes :—⁵

"To stand as gazers and lookers on is now wholly out of

¹ See, *e.g.*, a curious letter from Grindal to Parker in 1564 (*Parker Correspondence*, Letter cliv., p. 201).

² See Scudamore, *Not. Euch.*, p. 439.

³ Postea qui nobiscum non communicaturi sunt, emittuntur foras. *De Eccl. Ang. Religione Disciplina Sacrisque Ritibus*. Cap. XVI. *Works*, A.C.L., Vol. IV., p. 359.

⁴ *Works*, A.C.L. Vol. V., p. 515. His suggestion as to date was adopted, and the wording was modified.

⁵ Fragmentary Illustrations, p. 78. See Scudamore, *Not. Euch.*, p. 440.

use in all parishes. And the not-communicants generally do use to depart without bidding.”

Our Office
adapted
only for
Communi-
cants.

Apart from such evidence as to what actually happened, the whole structure of the Service, as it grew into the form with which we are familiar, has evidence stamped upon it that it was meant and fashioned for those who then and there were themselves the Communicants. There is very little in the form and phraseology of the pre-Reformation Mass (say, according to the use of Sarum), in which one who was not then communicating would find it unsuitable to join ; but I am surely not exaggerating when I say that the change from that Office to our own was a change from a Service which could quite naturally and suitably be so used to a Service which could not ; and that frequent mental adaptation of the words to circumstances other than those for which they were framed is necessary on the part of those who join in our existing “Order of the administration of the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion” when not themselves communicating.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that such adaptation is necessarily strained or unreal, still less that it is impossible. But I do say that I can find no trace whatever in the writings of the Divines of the Sixteenth or Seventeenth Centuries of their regarding the Form of Service for which they were largely responsible as being either intended for such use or suited to it.¹ That no sanction on their part

¹ The one possible exception is the little-known writer Scandret, probably a member of the Irish Church. See Scudamore, *Not. Euch.*, p. 441, 2nd ed.

for such a practice can be found, I am not prepared to assert. I can only say that I have sought in vain.

On the opposite side there is, of course, no lack of evidence ;

“ Good brethren,” says Bishop Jewel, at St. Paul’s Cross, in 1560, “ I will make it plain unto you, through God’s grace, by the most ancient writers that were in and after the Apostles’ time, and by the order of the first primitive Church, that then there could be no Private Mass, and that whoso would not communicate with the Priest was then commanded out of the congregation.”

Bishop
Jewel.

He then quotes the so-called Apostolical Canons with S. Chrysostom, S. Gregory, and others, and goes on thus :—

“ Yet there are some that whisper in corners . . . that the Holy Communion which now God of His great mercy hath restored to us is wicked and schismatical. . . .

“ O merciful God, who would think there could be so much wilfulness in the heart of man ? O Gregory ! O Augustine ! O Hierome ! O Chrysostom ! O Leo ! O Dionyse ! O Anacletus ! O Sixtus ! O Paul ! O Christ ! If we be deceived herein, ye are they that have deceived us. You have taught us these schisms and divisions, ye have taught us these heresies. Thus ye ordered the Holy Communion in your time : the same we received at your hand, and have faithfully delivered it unto the people.”¹

Nothing would be easier than to reproduce from the writings of the more vehement Protestants denunciations of the presence of non-communicants, couched sometimes in terms of downright violence. It is in every way more useful to enquire what was the view taken

¹ *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 19, 20, *Park Soc.*, compare pp. 177—8.

Bishop
Andrewes.

by such men as Bishop Andrewes and those who followed him, men who will not be suspected of disparaging Catholic order or custom. I can find little that bears directly upon the particular point, but what little there is will not support the theory that they either expected or desired any habitual presence of non-communicants at the Service. In the account of the Consecration of Jesus Chapel, Southampton, by Bishop Andrewes (the occasion on which he drew up the Consecration Service which we still use) it is recorded that, before the celebration of Holy Communion began, "Finitis precationibus istis . . . populus universus non communicaturus dimittitur, et porta clauditur."¹ It would be wrong to attach too much importance to a single example such as this, but the evidence of Bishop Cosin, a little later, has already been given.

Hear, however, what Bishop Andrewes explicitly says as to the necessity of actual partaking of the Elements, if the Eucharist is to have its true meaning. Cardinal Bellarmine, whom he is answering, had argued that the Church of England denies any sacrificial element in the Eucharist, and regards it merely as a communion for spiritual nourishment.²

¹ These prayers ended . . . all the people not about to communicate are dismissed and the door is shut. See the copy of this Service appended to Sparrow's *Rationale* (Parker, 1840), p. 415. See also *Winchester Diocesan Chronicle*, Sept. 1898, p. 137.

² Non credunt Eucharistiam institutam fuisse a Domino, ut offerretur Deo in sacrificium, sed solum ut Sacramentum communionis esset, et populo offerretur in alimoniam spiritualem.

Andrewes replies that the Church of England finds in the Eucharist both these characteristics, and adds :—

“Although they [English Churchmen] admit this, yet they deny that either of these uses (instituted by the Lord at the same time and conjointly) can by man be put asunder, or, either on account of the negligence of the people or the avarice of the Priests be broken the one from the other. The sacrifice which is there is a thank-offering, of which sacrifice the law is that he who offers it should partake of it. “Partake” —how? By receiving and eating, as the Saviour commanded. For as to “partaking by praying,” it is a modern and new-fangled kind of partaking, newer even than your Private Mass.”¹

Again, preaching before the King on Easter Day 1612, Andrewes, who has taken as his text 1 Cor. v. 8 : “therefore let us keep the feast,” says in the course of his sermon :—²

‘Εορτάζωμεν. The word is one, but two ways it is turned. Some read, *celebremus*. Some others, *epulemur*. But well : for first, it is kindly when we keep a feast, we make a feast. But

¹ *Responsio ad Bellarm.*, p. 250. A. C. L.

Hoc quidem etsi admittant, negant tamen utrumque usum hunc (sic a Domino simul et conjunctim institutum) divelli posse ab homine, aut propter vel populi negligentiam vel Sacerdotum avaritiam alterum ab altero abrumpi. Sacrificium, quod ibi est, Eucharisticum esse : cujus sacrificii ea lex, ut qui illud offerat, de eo participet : *participet autem accipiendo et comedendo* (uti jussit Salvator). Nam *participare impetrando, nuperum* id quidem et *novitium* participandi genus ; ac multo etiam magis quam *Missa ipsa privata*.

² *Sermons*, II, p. 298. Lib. A. C. L.

this, this feast, is not celebrated *sine hoc epulo*. If Christ be a propitiatory sacrifice, a peace-offering, I see not how we can avoid but the flesh of our peace-offering must be eaten in this feast by us, or else we evacuate the offering utterly, and lose the fruit of it. And was there a Passover heard of, and the lamb not eaten? Time was when he was thought no good Christian that thought he might do one without the other. No *celebremus* without *epulemur* in it.

Water-
land.

Early in the last century Daniel Waterland, in his *Review of the Doctrine of the Eucharist*, comments upon an important passage in Bingham's *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, in which Bingham had stated that "the most ancient and primitive custom was for all, that were allowed to stay and communicate in prayers, to communicate in the participation of the Eucharist also, except only the last class of penitents," and that such custom had subsequently, in the Sixth Century, been relaxed.

Upon this Waterland observes that, although in the Sixth Century

"the dismissal of the non-communicants might perhaps be deferred somewhat later, . . . yet dismissed they were before the Communion properly came on, and the absurdity which Chrysostom complained of, that of staying out the whole solemnity without communicating, never was admitted in those days."¹

The learning both of Bingham and Waterland makes the whole passage in each author well worth studying,

¹ See *Bingham*, XV, chaps. i.-iii. ; and *Waterland*, *Review*, chap. xiv.

but I only refer to them now as evidence of what was the view of non-communicating attendance held by such men in England two hundred years ago.

If there is any Anglican writer of the Seventeenth or Eighteenth Centuries in whose books we might expect to find encouragement given to the habitual attendance of non-communicants at the Holy Eucharist, it is John Johnson, author of *The Unbloody Sacrifice*. No one will regard his sacramental doctrine as halting or timorous. He pushes his expressions into a form which would have startled Laud or Andrewes. But on the point we are considering he writes thus :—

John
Johnson.

In some cases it seems pretty clear that the ancients were of opinion that the application of the merits of Christ's death might be made by virtue of the Oblation only, without eating and drinking the Eucharistical Body and Blood, as, for instance, to those who by banishment, imprisonment for Christ's sake, or other violent means, were debarred from the privilege of actual Communion.

After expanding this, he continues :—

In the Ninth Century, when the primitive ardour and purity of the Church was very much eclipsed, the people grew more backward and cold in the duty of communicating : these same Priests presumed to make the Oblation without any distribution or Communion ; and yet even then it was not allowed or approved ; nay, they who did it were censured in divers Councils held in France and Germany. I only speak of the efficacy of the Oblation in behalf of such as were detained from the Communion by some involuntary and invincible obstacle ; and am so far from having any good opinion of the solitary

Masses among the Papists that I am fully persuaded that in the primitive Church the Oblation and Communion were inseparable.¹

I am intentionally confining myself to the testimony of those who are usually referred to as the founders and leaders of Anglican High Churchmanship in the Seventeenth Century and in the reign of Queen Anne. I shall have occasion immediately to say something about the authorities of our own day. What I have tried to show is that the principle of making the Communion of the people an essential part of the Eucharistic Service was no mere cry of the earlier and more zealous Reformers in eager reaction against Roman abuses, but was deliberately adopted, and continuously supported by High Churchmen no less than by Low Churchmen, as a return to Scriptural and primitive teaching about the Holy Sacrament.

“Solitary
Mass.”

When I have suggested to thoughtful men the bearing of such passages as these upon what is now known as non-communicating attendance, I have sometimes been met by the reply that what Andrewes and his followers condemned was simply the Roman custom of “Solitary Mass,” where the Priest says the Office alone in the Church without the presence of any congregation. Let any one who thus restricts the meaning of “Solitary Mass” turn to the Fourteenth Book of Bingham’s *Antiquities*, chap. iv., section 5, where, in dealing with “The Corruption of Private and Solitary Mass,” the author states

¹ *The Unbloody Sacrifice*. Chap. II, Section II, Ang. Cath. Lib., p. 401.

explicitly what is in his view covered by the term. His words are as follows :

That we call "Solitary Mass," where the Priest receives alone without any other communicants, and sometimes says the Office alone without any assistants: such are all those Private and Solitary Masses in the Roman Church which are said at their private altars in the corners of their Churches without the presence of any but the Priest alone, *and all those Public Masses where none but the Priest receives, though there be many spectators of the action.* As there is no agreement of either of these with the institution of Christ, but a direct opposition to it (for that was designed to be a Communion among many: "We, being many, are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread," which is impossible where there are no communicants): so there is not the least footstep of any such practice in the Primitive Church.

II.

Look now with me more briefly at the second of the principles upon which the English Reformers based their action—the endeavour, namely, to simplify the Service and to make its meaning more obvious to all. The Service simplified.

The replacing of Latin by English, though the most important means employed, was yet only one means out of many. The need of some such effort had been recognised for years within the fold of the Roman Church, and even by the Pope himself. The Spanish Cardinal Quignon, a leader in the movement for such reform, was the friend and confidant both of Clement VIII. and of Paul III. His Reformed Breviary, published in 1535, furnished Archbishop Cranmer with the

materials for the vigorous Preface with which he introduced the Prayer Book of 1549 to the English people.¹ But Cranmer and those who worked with him were resolved that the endeavour which proved futile within the Roman Church should be brought to a successful issue in England. Listen again to a few sentences of the Preface “concerning the Service of the Church.”

Yet, because there is no remedy, but that of necessity there must be some Rules; therefore certain Rules are here set forth, which, as they are few in number, so they are plain and easy to be understood. So that here you have an Order for Prayer, and for the reading of the holy Scripture, much agreeable to the mind and purpose of the old Fathers, and a great deal more profitable and commodious than that which of late was used. It is more profitable, because here are left out many things, whereof some are untrue, some uncertain, some vain and superstitious; and nothing is ordained to be read, but the very pure Word of God, the holy Scriptures, or that which is agreeable to the same; and that in such a language and order as is most easy and plain for the understanding both of the readers and hearers. It is also more commodious both for the shortness thereof, and for the plainness of the order, and for that the rules be few and easy.

A hundred years pass, and again the writing of a Preface to the Prayer Book is entrusted to one of the foremost Bishops of the Church. Bishop Sanderson's Preface is worthy of the place accorded to it in our present Prayer Book, and it reiterates the very prin-

¹ For an account of Cardinal Quignon and his work see Father Gasquet's *Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer*, pages 20-23, 356-370.

principles laid down a century before. I need not trouble you with its familiar words.

These Prefaces, of course, were applicable to the successive Prayer Books as a whole, and not merely to the Service of Holy Communion. But it was there especially that greater simplicity and openness were felt to be necessary. The Reformers set themselves to clear away, so far as possible, the cloud of mystery in which the Ritual of the Mass had been shrouded from popular understanding. "The ceremonies retained," says Cranmer,¹ "be neither dark nor dumb ceremonies, but are so set forth that every man may understand what they do mean and to what use they do serve."

"Open-
ness."

To quote the striking words of Archbishop Benson in the Lincoln Judgment :—

The tenor of the Common Prayer is openness. The work of its framers was to bring out and recover the worship of the Christian congregation, and especially to replace the Eucharist in its character as the Communion of the whole Body of Christ. By the use of the mother tongue ; by the audibleness of every prayer ; by the Priest's prayers being made identical with the prayers of the congregation ; by the part of the clerks being taken by the people ; by the removal of the invisible and inaudible ceremonial, the English Church, as one of her special works in the history of the Catholic Church, restored the ancient share and right of the people in Divine Service.²

No clearer summary could be given of the character

¹ Preface *Of Ceremonies, why some be Abolished and some Retained.*

² Judgment in *Read v. The Bishop of Lincoln*, Nov. 21, 1890, p. 50.

and significance of the changes made, and it is needless that I should remind you of them further.

Post-Reformation
Roman
use.

It is not, however, without interest and significance to notice the later development in the Roman Church of the theory of an esoteric mystery belonging to the actual Celebration of the Mass, a mystery into which, so to speak, the Priest is initiated, the people being left outside. The practice of reciting the Canon of the Mass *secreto* is said to have become common so far back as the ninth or tenth century, "the earlier *disciplina arcani* having been extended from the heathen to the layman," and it was of course usual, with certain specified exceptions, at the time of the Reformation.¹ Hence the significance of the rubric in the First Prayer Book, directing the Priest to say the Prayer of Consecration "plainly and distinctly." This was altogether new. Among the fanciful reasons given by Lyndwood for the silence are these: "That the people may not be hindered praying;" and again: "Because these words belong to the Priest alone."² Follow this up in its natural outcome in the post-Reformation Roman Church. In 1661 a Bull was issued by Pope Alexander VII., in which he sets forth that he had heard with great sorrow that certain sons of perdition, to the ruin of souls and in despite of the practice of the Church, had reached such a height of madness (*ad eam nuper vesaniam pervenerint*) as to turn the Latin Missal into

¹ The Canon was known popularly as "*secreta*." It was called "*swimesse*" in early English, from *swigan* or *swigian*, to be silent. See Simmons' *Lay Folks' Mass Book*, p. 274.

² See Scudamore, *Not. Euch.*, p. 569.

French, and had dared to print and retail it without regard to state or sex, "and had thus endeavoured to cast down and trample the majesty of the most sacred Rite, embodied in the Latin words, and by their rash attempt expose to the vulgar the dignity of the holy mysteries." The Bull proceeds to denounce, under penalty of excommunication, the printing, reading, or possession of any Missal in French, by whomsoever written, and orders all existing copies to be burnt.¹

What are the present regulations upon the subject I do not know; but so lately as 1860 the provisions of the Bull of 1661 seem still to have been so far enforced in France that the Congregation of Rites forbade any translation whatever of the Canon of the Mass.²

I have called attention to this point in order to show that when the Reformers laid stress upon this particular change, it was not without ample reason, not perhaps without a wise prescience whereunto the thing might grow.

III.

In considering the third principle we have spoken of as underlying the liturgical changes in the English Communion Service, the desire, namely, to remove everything that could lead to a superstitious or materialistic view of the Holy Sacrament, we at once find ourselves dealing with a "question of degree," on which a wide difference of opinion has

Danger
of super-
stition.

¹ See Simmons' *Lay Folks' Mass Book*, pp. 387—388, where the text of the Bull is given in extenso.

² *Ib.*, p. 389.

from the first existed among Churchmen. It was—it now is—comparatively easy to say, Everything must show that Communion is essential to the rite; or, again, to say, Everything must be, so far as possible, visible to and understood by the worshippers. But the moment it is said, Remove what is superstitious or may tend to materialism, the question arises: *What* is superstitious? *What* will so tend? And here neither authorities nor common sense can settle the matter.

In offering instruction upon so mysterious a subject, much must always depend upon a teacher's turn of expression, and upon the educational level and the personal temperament of those whom he undertakes to instruct. In Divine worship it lay—it still lies—with the Priest, in numberless little undefinable details of manner rather than of act, to give, or to avoid giving to what he does some particular character or tone.

Myste-
riousness
of the
subject.

Again, in any consideration of the principle in question, we are brought face to face at once with some of the deepest mysteries of Sacramental doctrine—the manner in which the Lord uses the Consecrated Elements of bread and wine so as to make us verily and indeed partakers of His Body and His Blood. We are here in the presence of so profound a mystery, that we may even do harm, I think, by trying to define it accurately. Upon scarcely any theological subject have more books been written, either in former centuries or in our own. Almost every English Divine has dealt with it copiously. Cranmer, Ridley, Jewel, Hooker, Andrewes, Bramhall, Jeremy Taylor, Johnson,

Waterland, Wilson, and many more have dealt with it not incidentally, but at full length and from different points of view. In our own day, to name but a few, Pusey, and Robert Wilberforce, and Goode, and Scudamore, have recalled the writings of other days, patristic, mediæval and modern, and have added much that is their own.

I know not how it is with you, my Reverend Brethren, but to my own mind, after honest and painstaking study, the conviction has many a time come home that much of this honest reverent labour is in vain; that men are trying to put into words things which lie utterly beyond our ken, and that the trustiest guides fail to carry us much further than we were carried long ago in the Church Catechism. I quote a characteristic passage from Bishop Jeremy Taylor himself :

The Holy Communion or Supper of the Lord is the most sacred, mysterious, and useful conjugation of secret and holy things and duties in the religion. It is not easy to be understood, it is not lightly to be received : it is not much opened in the writings of the New Testament, but still left in its mysterious nature ; it is too much untwisted and nicely handled by the writings of the doctors, and by them made more mysterious, and like a doctrine of philosophy made intricate by explications and difficult by the aperture and dissolution of distinctions. So we sometimes espy a bright cloud formed into an irregular figure ; when it is observed by unskilful and fantastic travellers, looks like a centaur to some, and as a castle to others . . . So it is in this great mystery of our religion ; in which some espy strange things which God intended not, and others see not what God hath plainly told. . . . Some say it is a sacrifice, and others call it a sacrament ; some schools of learning make

Jeremy
Taylor.

it the instrument of grace in the hand of God ; others say that it is God himself in that instrument of grace. . . . Some come to it with their sins on their heads, and others with their sins in their mouth : some come to be cured, some to be quickened ; some to be nourished, and others to be made alive ; some out of fear and reverence take it but seldom, others out of devotion take it frequently . . . Some affirm the Elements are to be blessed by prayers of the Bishop or other Minister ; others say it is only by the mystical words, the words of institution ; and when it is blessed, some believe it to be the natural Body of Christ ; others to be nothing of that, but the blessings of Christ, His word and His spirit, His passion in representment, and His grace in real exhibition : and all these men have something of reason for what they pretend ; and yet the words of Scripture from whence they pretend are not so many as are the several pretensions.¹

Bishop
Moberly.

In juxtaposition to these words of perhaps the best loved and most widely known of all our Anglican Fathers, the man whose “Holy Living” and “Holy Dying” have for more than two centuries been an inspiration to thousands, I would place a sentence from the writings of a Bishop of our own day who deservedly possessed in a quite remarkable degree the confidence of English High Churchmen—Bishop Moberly, of Salisbury. His lecture on the Holy Communion in the “Bampton Lectures” of 1868 is as penetrating as it is devout and eloquent. But he, too, shrinks from defining, in a manner apt to be either presumptuous or meaningless, the terms which have been used for so great a mystery.

¹ *The Worthy Communicant, Introduction. Works, Vol. VIII, p. 8.*

“Shall I ask,” he says, “whether the feast which they there celebrate is or is not a sacrifice? Brethren, bear with me, while I venture to say that I am not very careful, so far as I can judge, to answer the question. Indeed, it appears to me to be little more than a question of words, which bears upon no important issue. The feast is what it is, and whether that is or is not what constitutes a sacrifice must depend altogether upon the precise meaning attached to the word ‘sacrifice,’ and the definition given to it. There surely are good and innocent senses in which it may well and rightly be so called. There surely is a sense, the highest—that in which the actual offering of the Lord’s Body and Blood upon the altar of the Cross was once offered, the only full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world—in which we may not dare so to call it. It is perhaps conceivable that, in the eyes of Him Who from His seat in Eternity looks upon the things of time, as ‘the Lamb was once slain from the foundation of the world,’ so the great sacrifice and all its sacred commemorations, its types faithfully celebrated before, its commemorations faithfully separated after, may be wholly and absolutely one, the one work of Christ in Himself and His people. I know not ; but we, whose standpoint is in the things of time, cannot speak so. We could not, without the express word of Holy Writ, have spoken of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. To us there is before and after. To us our blessed Lord came, and died, and rose and ascended at definite dates in this series of things. We must not confound time and Eternity, nor our own doings with the Lord’s doings. It may sound humble, but I believe it is really presumptuous to do so.”¹

¹ Bampton Lectures, on *The Administration of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ*. Lecture VI, p. 163-4. (3rd ed.)

With the two passages quoted it may be interesting to compare Hooker’s well-known and eloquent passage to the like effect. (*Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book V, chap. lxxvii, section 3.)

I abstain then deliberately from entering now upon those deep controversies about Eucharistic doctrine. They have had—they still have—their necessary place in safeguarding the deposit of our holy Faith; and to some of those whom I have named we owe, as English Churchmen, a debt which we cannot over-estimate. All, however, that is within our present purpose is to ask simply what were some of the dangers of superstition or materialism which the English Reformers saw, and what steps were taken to guard against them.

Avoidance
of super-
stition
with
regard to
the conse-
crated
elements.

Nothing is more startling, nothing occasionally more painful, in Edwardian or Elizabethan controversy, than the vehement or even coarse invective which the writers allowed themselves to use in denouncing the superstitions of the Mass, as they had themselves seen and known them in practice. Happily for our Church, such controversial phraseology found no ultimate place in the body of our Prayer Book, though upon some of our Thirty-nine Articles the conflict has left abiding scars.

The peril or difficulty centred, as was to be expected, in the attitude both of Priest and people towards the Consecrated Elements themselves. It was not for nothing that the sweeping change was made by which all such rubrics as the following were clean removed from the Office of Holy Communion. I quote from the Sarum Missal :

These words [*Hoc est enim Corpus Meum*] ought to be said in one and the same breath without pause. After these words let the Priest incline to the Host, and afterwards elevate It above

his forehead, that It may be seen by the people ; and reverently replace It before the chalice, making a cross with the same.¹

It would be as easy as it is needless to multiply such quotations.

It is difficult to picture a greater contrast than that which the whole series of these elaborate rubrics presents to the simple directions in our successive Prayer Books. Nor, I am persuaded, can any man who looks calmly into the facts have any doubt that the absence of the old directions from the new Book was an absence due to determined and deliberate rejection. People may approve or disapprove of what Cranmer and his colleagues did, but that their action in this particular respect was intentional and significant is placed beyond question by the existing letters and sermons of the men themselves.² They set themselves, by deliberate changes both in the Rubrics and in the text of the Prayers, to lop off unsparingly what they deemed the "dangerous deceits" which had grown out of the doctrine of Transubstantiation. We have seen that the new Service was made pre-eminently a Communion, and a Communion in both

¹ *Debent ista verba proferrī cum uno spiritu et sub una prolatione, nulla pausatione interposita. Post hæc verba inclinet se Sacerdos ad hostiam, [et capite inclinato illam adoret] et postea elevet eam supra frontem ut possit a populo videri; et reverenter illam reponat ante calicem in modum crucis per eandem factæ.*

The clause within brackets was added to the Sarum Missal in 1554, after the reconciliation with Rome.

² See, e.g., Cranmer, *Answer to the Devon Rebels*, Art. iv ; *Works*, Park. Soc., i, p. 173 ; and *Answer to Gardiner*, iv, 9, Park. Soc., p. 229, &c., &c.

kinds. We have seen that it was popularised and translated and simplified. But these things might have been effected without any marked change of actual doctrine. Not so the changes of which we are now speaking. They were distinctly intended, and thoughtfully and soberly framed, to render impossible the sort of 'element-worship' (I use the words of Archbishop Benson)¹, which had in the popular mind replaced the true doctrine of the Holy Sacrament.

The
teaching
of High
Church
Anglicans.

This protest against a materialistic doctrine of the Presence of Christ in the Consecrated Elements, and against the adoration superstitiously paid to them in consequence, was reiterated, as we know, by nearly every leading English Reformer throughout the Sixteenth Century.² It is sometimes said that their protest, couched often in terms which seem to us irreverent, was no more than the inevitable reaction against the superstitions in which an ignorant people had been encouraged by a corrupt priesthood, and that with the spread of enlightenment the danger passed speedily away.

It is well, then, to turn as before to the High Church Divines of the next Century, and to see whether they realised the permanent danger of false and superstitious

¹ *The Seven Gifts*, p. 167.

² See, e.g., Cranmer, *On the Lord's Supper*, Park. Soc., pp. 228-9, 234-5; Jewel, *Sermon on 1 Cor. xi, 23*; *Works*, Park. Soc., i, 15, 16; and *Controversy with Harding*, Art. VII, *ib.*, p. 512-13; Art. VIII, p. 514-552; and *Sermon on Haggai*, i, 2, *ib.* p. 990; Becon, *Catechism*, Part V, Park. Soc., p. 251, 265-7, 283, &c. Ridley and Latimer, *Conference*, Park. Soc., pp. 106-107. Examples might easily be multiplied.

and even materialistic teaching about the Consecrated Elements. Not only was the system of our Prayer Book Rubrics maintained in its simplicity, in contrast with the elaborate provisions of the pre-Reformation Order, but the Eucharistic teaching of Bishop Andrewes and his followers is brimful of vigorous protest against any such mistaken view about the nature of Christ's Presence in the Consecrated Elements as had given to those elaborate rules their dangerous significance.

Bishop Andrewes deals to some extent with what he Andrewes. calls "the external adoration of the Sacrament" in his "Answer to Cardinal Perron."¹ But more perhaps to the point is a passage in his Defence of King James's reply to Cardinal Bellarmine. The King had objected to the Cardinal's advocacy of the elevation of the Consecrated Elements, *adorandi causa*. Andrewes, in support of the King, declares that Christ Himself is always and everywhere to be adored, "but not the Sacrament, the earthly part as Irenæus calls it, the visible as Augustine."² And again, referring specially to Processions with adoration.

The institution was, of a Sacrifice that it should be consumed; of a Sacrament that it should be received and eaten,

¹ *Minor Works*, A.C.L., pp. 15-17.

² Imo Christus ipse Sacramenti res, in et cum Sacramento : extra, et sine sacramento, ubi ubi est adorandus est. Rex autem Christum in Eucharistia vere præsentem, vere et adorandum statuit, rem scilicet Sacramenti ; at non Sacramentum, terrenam scilicet partem ut Irenæus, visibilem ut Augustinus. (*Respons.*, A.C.L., p. 266.)

not that it should be reserved and carried about. Beyond the design (*finem*) of the Sacrament, beyond the force of the command, no use of it exists. Let that be done which Christ willed to be done when He said, "Do this;" and nothing will remain which the Priest might exhibit out of the pyx and the people might adore.¹

Cosin. Bishop Cosin, in defending the kneeling posture for communicants, writes thus:—

True it is that the Body and Blood of Christ are sacramentally and really (not feignedly) present when the blessed Bread and Wine are taken by the faithful communicants; and as true is it also that they are not present but only when the Hallowed Elements are so taken Therefore whosoever so receiveth them, at that time when he receiveth them, rightly doth he [*i.e.*, by kneeling] adore and reverence his Saviour there together with the sacramental Bread and Cup exhibiting His own Body and Blood unto them. Yet because that Body and Blood is neither sensibly present (nor otherwise at all present but only to them that are duly prepared to receive them, and in the very act of receiving them and the Consecrated Elements together, to which they are sacramentally in that act united) the adoration is then and there given to Christ Himself, neither is nor ought to be directed to any external sensible objects, such as are the Blessed Elements.²

¹ Institutum enim tum sacrificii, ut absumi; tum Sacramenti ut accipi, manducari, non recondi et circumferri. Extra Sacramenti finem, extra præcepti vim, usus haud ullus. Fiat quod fieri voluit Christus cum dixit, 'Hoc facite': nihil reliqui fiet quod monstret Sacerdos, quod adoret populus, de pyxide. *Ibid.*, p. 267.

² Notes on the *Book of Common Prayer*, second series. *Works*, Vol V (A.C.L.), p. 345.

Considerable interest attaches to the discussion, which took place in the Savoy Conference of 1661, with respect to the "Declaration on Kneeling," or, as it is sometimes called, "the Black Rubric," appended to the Order of Holy Communion in our present Prayer Book. The Declaration in a slightly different form had a place in Edward VI.'s Second Prayer Book, but it was omitted from the Elizabethan Book. Liturgical authorities differ widely in opinion as to the intention and the significance of the change of wording in 1661 from "*real and essential* presence" to "*corporal* presence," but the importance of the incident for our present purpose consists less in the precise words adopted than in the evidence it affords of the existence of a danger which required to be guarded against. The Bishops, it is true, in reply to the Puritan request for such a Rubric, replied :—

"The
Black
Rubric."

This Rubric is not in the Liturgy of Queen Elizabeth, nor confirmed by law ; nor is there any great need of restoring it, the world being now in more danger of profanation than of idolatry. Besides, the sense of it is declared sufficiently in the 28th Article of the Church of England.¹

They did, however, restore the Rubric, on the advice, according to Baxter, of Bishop Morley and others ; and so decided a High Churchman as L'Estrange, in his notes upon the Holy Communion, published first in 1659 and re-edited in 1690, remarks :—

How, by whom, or upon what account and inducement this

¹ Cardwell, *Conferences*, p. 354.

excellent rubric came to be omitted in Queen Elizabeth's Liturgy, I cannot determine and would gladly learn.¹

Bingham. A few years later our own Joseph Bingham draws upon the stores of his massive learning to prove that what he calls host-worship² was a thing unknown in the first eleven centuries of Christianity, but for our purpose the special interest of his chapters lies again in the evidence they afford as to the opinions held by sober Anglican Churchmen of Bingham's type.

For example, in his section entitled, "*No Adoration of the Host before the Twelfth or Thirteenth Century*," he says :—

A great many proofs are alleged out of the Ancients to prove this adoration. But they prove no more, but either that a veneration was paid to the Sacrament, as to the books of the Gospel, and the water of Baptism, and the Lord's table, and many other sacred things, which no one denies ; or else, that the adoration was given to Christ as divinely present everywhere, or as sitting at the right hand of God in heaven ; whither they were directed, by the admonition of *Sursum corda*, to "lift up their hearts," and to elevate their own souls to adore Him there.³

¹ L'Estrange's *Alliance of Divine Offices*, A.C.L., p. 329. The whole subject of "the Black Rubric" and its history has been exhaustively examined by the Rev. T. W. Perry ("*Declaration on Kneeling*," 1863), by Scudamore in his *Notitia*, pp. 946-950, and, from a different point of view, by the Rev. N. Dimock (*Vox Liturgiæ Anglicanæ*, pp. 63-80). See also the interesting comments of Keble (*Eucharistical Adoration*, pp. 142-154. 6th Ed.).

² Book XV, Chap. V, Sec. V, p. 251. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

It would be easy to go on, but I need not, I think, weary you with more quotations upon this branch of the subject.

It is no doubt possible to find in the writings of Andrewes or Laud or Johnson, or even of Bishop Wilson, phrases which would convey a very different idea of the Eucharistic doctrine held by each writer from that which is conveyed by a larger study of his works. This is specially true with regard to Andrewes himself. To quote the words of one of our foremost students of Anglican Divinity :—

Isolated
quotations
dangerous.

If the inquirer will understand [Andrewes' Eucharistic teaching], he must not confine his attention to passages bearing directly on the Eucharist, such as he may find in the index to the author's *Works*. He must enlarge his scope, so as to acquaint himself with Andrewes' style and manner. Thus, what strange inferences the literalist might arrive at with respect to the Element in Baptism, from such a passage as the following, taken from a sermon on the Resurrection :

[The Blood of Christ] "ran not waste, but divided into two streams : one into the laver of the new birth, our baptism applied to us outwardly to take away the spots of our sin ; the other into ' the Cup of the New Testament in His Blood.' " ¹

A similar warning has, of course, been often and wisely given as regards quotations from some of the early Fathers of the Church. But let any man read carefully some of Andrewes' less rhetorical but more accurately written controversial books, and he will be in no doubt as to the harmony of his Eucharistic doctrine with what we may call, in its true and guarded

¹ *Sermons*, Vol. III (A.C.L.), p. 101.

sense, the "Protestant" teaching of the Book of Common Prayer.¹

Let me now recapitulate very briefly what I have tried to say.

Recapitulation.

The Church of England at the Reformation made important changes in the Office for the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. These changes may be grouped under three heads: The restoration of Communion to its proper place; Provision that all should be visible and easy to understand; The removal of what had proved likely to tend to superstition. The action taken to this end was sober, deliberate, and continuous. Abuses were unsparingly corrected where necessary, but the old lines of the Catholic Church were reverently preserved and followed with a care unknown in some other countries, and at the same time appeal was ceaselessly and fearlessly made to the teaching of Holy Scripture and of the Primitive Church. The changes proposed or effected were continuously under consideration for more than a hundred years. And the Prayer Book, in its ultimate form, was the product of the influence and teaching of the High Churchmen of the Seventeenth Century as truly as of the Reformers of the Sixteenth. Those High Churchmen (and this is the

¹ In justification of the use of this term, I would refer to the recent Charge of the Bishop of Oxford, who brings the weight of his unrivalled historical authority to prove that "there ought to be no hesitation in admitting that the Church of England, since the Reformation, has a right to call herself, and cannot reasonably object to be called, Protestant." *Fourth Visitation Charge*, 1899, pp. 47-49.

point I wish specially to emphasize) weighed and approved the characteristics distinctive of our present Prayer Book as a compendium of doctrine and worship, Scriptural, Catholic, and Reformed.¹

This important fact is most inadequately grasped by present-day controversialists. I assert, without fear of contradiction by any competent student, that some Churchmen who now claim to belong to the school of Andrewes are slipping, often inadvertently, into words and ways which Andrewes would have been foremost to condemn.

Let us come to particulars.

Among the manifold activities of the Church of England during the last half century, no single thing, in the department of doctrine and worship, calls for such profound thankfulness to our Lord and Master as the re-awakened care for the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, the centre of our devotion, the richest nourishment of our souls, the highest, deepest, clearest evidence and expression of our fellowship with Him Who died for us and rose again, and in Him with one another. There can be no Parish Priest of ripe experience here to-day who has not himself seen and marked and thanked God for the growth among Christian people generally of a truer sense of that immeasurable blessing, the Lord's legacy to us "till He come," the source of the strength and courage which we so sorely need for all that He has given us to do.

Revival of
Euchar-
istic Devo-
tion.

¹ Keble has called attention to the marks of the High Churchmen's handiwork in the Liturgy as finally revised (*Eucharistical Adoration*, pp. 161—163, 6th Ed.).

We have much still to learn about its use, much to confess and amend as to its widespread neglect. But when we compare the facts of to-day, as shown, say, in the Visitation Returns you have sent me, with what similar Returns would have shown—did show—fifty years since, we thank God and take courage.

Is it wonderful, is it altogether blameworthy, that Parish Priests who have watched and cherished the spread of that ampler obedience to the Lord's command, who have seen its fruitfulness in life and at the hour of death, and who lament and chafe against the apathy and prejudice and ignorance which still keep so many thousands back from a privilege which might be theirs—is it wonderful that among such men there are here and there some who have let their eagerness to leave no means untried mislead them into methods which they think they can justify by the precedents of other days, although the methods may prove, when tested, to be neither loyal nor sound? Such men, from their very eagerness upon the subject, ought to be the first to welcome whatever the study of Holy Scripture and of the history of the Church can teach us as to what is true and false, wise or foolish, safe or dangerous, in the methods we employ. Such men, may I add, ought to be among the first to listen to the counsel of those on whom the Church has laid, as regards guidance and rule, a responsibility which grows weightier and more anxious every year.

Present
Day Diffi-
culties.

Recall, then, with these thoughts in mind, the three principles we have referred to as being part of our heritage in the Church of England: Communion essen-

tial to the Rite ; simplicity and openness throughout ; avoidance of anything that may tend to superstition. Is any one of these principles jeopardised by present tendencies or drift ? Not, I feel assured, in most of our Churches. But in some, surely, a warning is imperatively required ; and it is my wish, nay I am bound, to give it plainly. The desire to put the Holy Communion in its proper place as the paramount Service of all—the one Service expressly ordained by the Lord Himself—has striven most naturally to find expression and fulfilment. The question is how to realise this ideal in the present condition of ordinary English life without imperilling the principle that it is by actual Communion that the Eucharistic Celebration becomes to any of us the “highest act of worship.” We desire faithfully and trustfully to “show the Lord’s death till He come.” But according to Holy Scripture the specific act required for doing this is Communion. St. Paul’s words are : “As often *as ye eat this bread and drink this cup* ye do show, or proclaim, (*καταγγέλλετε*) the Lord’s death till He come.”¹ For the faithful communicant the “highest act of worship” is that in which he himself, in this appointed manner, participates in the showing of Christ’s death. I recall again to you the almost scornful words of Bishop Andrewes which I have already quoted.²

You partake by receiving and eating, as the Saviour commanded ; for as to “partaking by praying,” it is a modern and new-fangled kind of partaking.

¹ I Cor. xi, 26.

² See above, p. 71.

Early
Communion.

But we are met by the practical difficulty that (quite apart from the question of Fasting, to which I will refer immediately), very many of our communicants find that Communion at an early hour in the morning is in every sense more suitable and profitable to their soul's health than Communion at a mid-day service. This feeling, or rather this realisation of fact, shared probably by most of us, calls imperatively for the consideration of every man who is set to minister in Christ's Name to Christ's flock, and to provide, to the very utmost of his power, for meeting their needs in the most helpful way. Two things he must try to do. He must provide the Service of Holy Communion at the hour when the communicants in his parish can best and most profitably take advantage of it. And further, he must teach them to realise that, great as is the blessing of other Services in the House of God, there is none like that Service, either in its claims upon the Christian conscience, or in its sustenance to the Christian soul, and that to it are appropriate whatever accessories can profitably and wholesomely add to it dignity, solemnity, and beauty. Truly, as experience shows, the problem of how to meet these coincident requirements is not, in modern English life, an easy one to solve.

Fasting
Reception.

The difficulty is of course gravely increased by the revival in our own day of a widespread and often profitable observance of the rule or custom of receiving the Holy Communion fasting. It would be impossible here, and incidentally, to deal adequately with that question; but it concerns the

matter in hand, and some reference to it I must make.

We have all, I suppose, seen in ourselves or others the genuine gain of such self-discipline in preparation for the Christian's highest act of worship. We value the godly use of a reverent and ancient custom, the observance of which was, in the Fifth Century and afterwards, more than once solemnly enjoined in Canons of local and provincial Councils. We know that many of the best and most honoured teachers of the English Church have followed and commended it. But the rule or custom is one which in the Church of England for the last three centuries has been binding upon no man's conscience, except in so far as its observance is found profitable to his soul as fitting him better for the solemn act of Communion. The subject has been recently handled with admirable clearness and force by the Bishops of the Northern Province in Convocation assembled. I reprint for your careful consideration the weighty utterance which they have unanimously put forth upon lines similar to those of the statement published a few years ago by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury.¹

Solemn utterances of this kind are, as it seems to me, too little read. If the Service for the Consecration of Bishops means what it says, they are, to say the least, worth some attention. I will quote a single paragraph, and I will ask you to remember with what authority it comes.

Statements
of the
Bishops in
Convoca-
tion.

¹ See Appendix B.

Fasting is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. It is valuable or not according as it fulfils the proposed object. It may be employed to obtain for the Communicant the fullest command over his powers of attention and devotion. But it is evident that the fitness of fasting for obtaining this result depends in a large degree upon climate, domestic habits, age and the like ; and exhaustion, as we all know, is itself in most cases fatal to spiritual self-command. And more than this : while the spontaneous combination of Prayer and Fasting corresponds with a spiritual instinct, it is contrary to the tenor of apostolic teaching, and indeed of the teaching of the Lord Himself, to make the observance of a period of material abstinence a necessary condition of participating in the highest spiritual Service of the Church. The inherent discordance between the custom of Fasting Reception and its object becomes still more obvious if fasting is made obligatory from a fixed hour, when it is remembered that the duration of the fast and its physical effects will necessarily vary in individual cases, and are practically indeterminate. Nor can it be overlooked that the different conditions of town and country parishes introduce serious difficulties in the uniform application of any such rule. It may be added that, so far as Fasting Reception is advocated on the ground of reverence for the Sacrament, the arguments have a wider range. They may be used with equal, and some will think with greater, force in favour of fasting after reception.

Mis-chievous
Manuals.

Absolutely different this from the teaching we often hear upon the subject. On this, my Reverend Brethren, I must speak plainly. Our Prayer Book and Formularies significantly abstain from any such direction as can be even strained into an injunction that Fasting Reception should be the rule for all. Yet among Church people, and especially among our younger Communicants,

there are booklets and Devotional Manuals now in circulation which not merely enjoin it as an absolute duty, but enjoin it sometimes in such terms and with such particulars as ought to be repellent to any one who understands the spirit and teaching of the Church of England, nay, the spirit and teaching of the New Testament.

I have before me a Manual for First Communion which warns the child under instruction to wash its mouth well overnight, lest, if this were done in the morning, a drop of water might accidentally be swallowed—and so on. I have another, intended for Confirmation candidates, who are taught in these words :

If you swallow even a drop of water, that is breaking your fast. . . . To make your Communion after breaking your fast dishonours Jesus : it is a sin against God and the Church ; it is a sin against the Holy Ghost ; and if done wilfully and against light, it is a mortal sin.

Now I do not doubt that every man here denounces such teaching just as I do, whencesoever it be imported into our Church, and of course I know it is not new. But I quote the words, and I am sorry to say I could easily quote more, that you, as “ Watchmen and Stewards of the Lord ” in your parishes, may be awake to the fact that such books, professing to give our Church’s teaching, may fall into the hands of some of your young and ill-educated Communicants. The basis on which such books rest must be a gross and materialistic doctrine, a return to the most mischievous sort of

Contrast St. Paul's teaching. mediæval superstition.¹ What would St. Paul have said to it? Hear him speak to the Church of Colossæ :

Take heed lest there be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.²

As Bishop Lightfoot paraphrases it :

In Christ you have been exalted unto the sphere of the Spirit ; do not plunge yourself again into the atmosphere of material and sensuous things.³

St. Paul further speaks to the same Church :

If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, handle not, nor taste, nor touch (all which things are to perish with the using) after the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body, but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.⁴

To take again Bishop Lightfoot's paraphrase :

Why do you—you who are citizens of heaven—bow your necks again to the tyranny of material ordinances? . . . It is the same old story again—the same round of hard, meaningless, vexatious prohibitions. "Handle not." "Taste not." "Touch not." What folly! When all these things—these meats and

¹ For examples of such teaching in former days see the references given in Bishop Kingdon's *Fasting Communion*, pp. 364-5, and Puller, *Concerning the Fast before Communion*, pp. 32, 33.

² Col. ii. 8.

³ *Commentary on Epistle to Colossians* p. 247.

⁴ Col. ii. 20-23.

drinks and the like—are earthly, perishable, wholly trivial and unimportant! . . . What is this but to abandon God's Word for precepts which are issued by human authority and inculcated by human teachers? All such things have a show of wisdom, I grant. There is an officious parade of religious devotion, an eager affectation of humility; there is a stern ascetic rigour, which ill-treats the body: but there is nothing of any real value to check indulgence of the flesh.¹

I find absolutely nothing in common between such superstitious materialistic teaching as I have referred to and the deliberate reasonable self-discipline which finds, as so many thousands have found, a temporary abstinence from food to be helpful to that reverent intentness with which our Lord's gift of Himself in the Holy Communion ought to be received. In such a Fast there need be, there is, nothing materialistic, nothing carnal. It is the body brought under subjection to the spirit, not because some rigid man-made rule has laid a burden on you; not for some supposed physical reason, which can scarce be expressed in words without irreverence; but because you have learnt how the body too can take its part in preparation for the sacred rite,² and how you may most surely be "at your best" when you come to the Table of the Lord.

If the mere fact that rules prescribing the Fast before Communion were long ago laid down in certain local and provincial Councils, or that writers in the Fourth or Fifth Centuries describe the custom as universal, seem

Fasting
Reception
may be
profitable.

The
ancient
rule.

¹ *Commentary on Epistle to Colossians*, p. 267.¹

² See Bishop Wordsworth of Salisbury's *The Holy Communion*, p. 235.

to any English Churchman to lay on him a binding obligation, I would ask him to contrast the then life—the life say of North Africa or Southern Gaul in the Fifth Century—with English life to-day, and to judge whether the conditions which make all the difference to such rules do really correspond at all.¹

I do not make little of the fact that such a rule did once exist: nay, that in the Middle Ages it was

¹ Bishop Kingdon's volume on *Fasting Communion* (Longmans, 1875) contains a store of valuable information on the subject; and his main contention seems to me to be successfully proved, though some of his facts and inferences may be open to challenge. I have also read carefully what is urged by the Rev. F. W. Puller (*Concerning the Fast before Communion*, Masters) and others in favour of the binding character of the rule. This publication and others like it are entitled to all respect as serious contributions to the study of the subject; but I find them entirely unconvincing as to any present obligation upon English Churchmen. The argument in favour of the supposed Apostolic authority for the custom seems to me to break down completely. It is impossible to discuss it here; I am only anxious not to be supposed to have overlooked it. Again, a physical rule of abstinence which can be wholesomely observed with comparative ease by Orientals or Africans may have a totally different nature and effect among ourselves (see Puller, p. 42). The extreme rarity of actual Communion by the laity during many centuries of the Church's life must also be borne carefully in mind. It may partly have been an actual consequence of the rules; it partly explains how they were workable.

The subject is carefully treated in a series of addresses by Dr. T. R. Harris, Rector of S. Paul's Church, New York. (*Non-communicating Attendance in the light of History*. Whittaker, New York, 1888.)

regarded as of general obligation even in our own Church of England. It has thus a strong *primâ facie* claim upon our attention, to say the least. But it is of the utmost importance to remember that during most of the centuries during which the obligatory rule prevailed, the communion of the laity was an exceedingly rare and exceptional thing. A rule which would be burdensome and unhelpful if observed every week may obviously have a totally different character when its observance is confined to one day, or even three days, in the year.

I have already referred more than once to John Johnson, the well-known author of *The Unbloody Sacrifice*, published in 1718. He has a long and interesting paragraph on the subject of the fast before Communion. From his general attitude in controversial matters, we should expect him to take a rigid view upon such a question, but he is emphatic in asserting that no such fast is obligatory, and he goes on to say that "we of this Northern Climate are vain if we pretend to imitate the old Eastern African or Italian Christians in their fastings." I bespeak your consideration for the passage in connection with the better known remarks of Bishop Jeremy Taylor on the subject.¹

John
Johnson.

I have said enough, I think, about the matter. I am most anxious not to seem to decry or deprecate the wise observance by all who find it helpful of a rule of fasting reception of the Holy Communion. Only

Reasonable
service.

¹ *The Unbloody Sacrifice*, Part II. Chap V., iv. § 2. Compare Jeremy Taylor, Discourse xiii. *Of the Manner of Fasting. The Worthy Communicant*, chap. v. § 1. *Ductor Dubitantium*, Book III. chap. iv., Rule xii.

let those who rigidly observe it beware lest "the thing which should have been for their wealth become to them an occasion of falling," an occasion of falling to a lower level than that of "the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free."¹ It need not be anything of the kind. It may be helpful to body, soul, and spirit, if its observance be what S. Paul calls a "reasonable service,"² if it be not taught as a Divine command, or laid as a burden upon the weak shoulders of the young, the aged, or the sick. Terrible would be the responsibility of any one who by so using it himself or insisting upon it for others, should keep back some waiting soul from the Communion of the Saviour's Body and Blood. Instances of sick Communicants so kept back, to their infinite distress, have been brought to my notice by one of our leading physicians. With whatever weight attaches to my office, I declare such action to be in my judgment gravely culpable.

If, however, the fast be safeguarded from abuses such as these, I have of course no word to say against it, be it as rigid as you will. Rather I heartily, gladly, hopefully encourage whatever may enable any of us to offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, more worthily in the great Sacrament of the Saviour's love.

Difficulties
due to
conditions
of modern
life.

To return from this digression to the point at which it started. The Parish Priest of to-day has to provide for the needs of parishioners who desire (let us thank God for it) to communicate more frequently than has ever, I suppose, been customary since the early ages of the Church. He finds that some of them prefer to communicate fasting; and, if their reasons be sound, he

¹ Gal. v. 1.

² Rom. xii. 1.

is rightly desirous that the hour of Communion shall be such as to meet their wish. At the same time, he is anxious that his people shall realise the unique greatness of the Eucharistic Service, and that it shall not be relegated, so to speak, to an unobserved corner in the devotions of the Lord's Day.

If it be indeed the case that the conditions of modern English life render impossible any plan which shall meet these various needs, something of this ideal must be modified or sacrificed, until new conditions come. Let him call his Communicants together, and consult them frankly and in detail as to what will best contribute to the good of all. If some modification must be made, some arrangement adopted which falls short of his ideal, let it be such as to interfere least with the fundamental principles of our Holy Rite.

What we all desire to see is that the Holy Communion may indeed become for all the great Service of the Lord's Day, and that every Christian man, by taking his full part therein, may show the Lord's death till He come. But we are very far as yet from realising in England that Scriptural and primitive ideal.

As a matter of fact, what has happened in a good many of our town parishes, and in a few country parishes, has unhappily been this. To magnify the honour of the Sacramental Service—to "place it in its proper central position"—all have been urged to attend it, though the Communicants are few: nay, sometimes actual Communion thereat has been even discouraged. This, surely, however excellent the intention, is a fundamental and grievous error.

The
"Central
Service"
of the day.

To teach people better to value and to use the Holy Sacrament, it is being celebrated in a way against which our Church of England has emphatically set its face. The act of the people's Communion, one of the main essentials of the Rite, is slighted, and the seeds of a false doctrine of the Eucharist are week by week sown in the minds of the ignorant and the young.

Modern
High
Church
Divines.

It may be thought that in what I have said I am running counter to the accepted view of modern High Churchmen upon this very important subject. I ask your attention, therefore, to a few quotations from leading authorities of our own day, whose sympathy with that school of thought will not, I think, be doubted. My difficulty lies, not in finding such utterances, but in making suitable selection among them.

I choose, then, five distinguished men, no two of whom perhaps on ecclesiastical matters generally would be in exact accord, but every one of whom was regarded by his followers as a loyal and consistent High Churchman—Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop Christopher Wordsworth, Bishop Moberly, Prebendary Sadler, the Rev. W. E. Scudamore. Their words shall speak for themselves.

Bishop
Samuel
Wilber-
force.

In his farewell Charge to the Diocese of Oxford in 1869, Bishop Wilberforce spoke as follows :—

Suffer me to name to you one practice, the growth of which among us I view with great apprehension. I mean a tendency unquestionably manifested in certain quarters to change the idea of the Holy Eucharist from a Communion of the faithful into a function of the celebrating Priest. Such a change is, in my most mature judgment, no lawful progress in increased

reverence for that great Sacrament upon the lines of our own Church In strict agreement, as we believe, with the words of Holy Writ, and with the teaching of the Primitive Church, we do not regard the Communion of the faithful as an accident of the Holy Eucharist, which may be added to it, or separated from it, at will, leaving the great function of intercession untouched by the omission, but as of the very essence of the Sacrament. So it was at the institution: "Take, eat, this is My Body." The mysterious Presence and actual Communion are bound indissolubly together It is certain that this practice is most intimately connected, both as to cause and consequence, with the greatest practical corruptions of the Papal Communion. Whatever, then, tends to its introduction amongst ourselves appears to me to threaten the existence of our whole religious system The very purpose for which these practices are recommended seems to me at variance with the true idea of the Eucharist; for effectual with God, as we doubt not, through Christ our Lord, this great appointed act of the Church's intercession is, I know no ground for supposing that prayer offered up by those who are present at the celebration, but do not partake in it, is one whit more prevailing than prayer at any other time or in any other place. Nor does it seem to me that a surrounding crowd of non-communicants adds any honour to the Sacrament. On the contrary, to remain and not communicate seems to me to dishonour Christ's institution and to injure the soul of the worshipper. . . . Against these changes, and such as these, I venture, with a parting voice, to warn you.¹

From the unique personality of Bishop Wilberforce turn to the erudite and profound theologian, Bishop Christopher Wordsworth. In a treatise on 'the Holy Sacraments,' which he re-edited in 1879 from Visitation

Bishop
Christo-
pher
Words-
worth.

¹ *Charge to the Diocese of Oxford*, 1869, pp. 30-32.

Addresses delivered some years before, he writes thus :—

“It is remarkable that some who would impose upon us what is called ‘Fasting Communion’ as a matter of necessity, on a plea of reverential obedience to the ancient Church, are also found to recommend, and even to require, ‘non-communicating attendance,’ in opposition to the law and practice of the ancient Church, and to the command of Christ Himself. And this is done even on a pretext of reverence for the Holy Sacrament, and for Christ Himself, Who instituted it, not in order to be looked at, but to be received, according to His express command. . . . That the Church of England desires and intends that all her members who have been baptized and confirmed should come to the Holy Communion, and that all who are present at the administration of the Communion should communicate, appears to be certain. . . . The whole of her Service after the Prayer for the Church Militant is so framed as to be applicable only to communicants. It cannot reasonably be used by others. And in her rubrics in the Office she contemplates that all present will communicate. . . . But anything that is a breach of Christ’s law cannot be otherwise than offensive to Him. And this growing practice of ‘non-communicating attendance’ calls also for solemn warning, as tending to laxity of life. It is liable to become a compromise between God and the World, and seeks to reconcile the two. Actual reception of the Holy Communion has this practical benefit among others, that it demands previous strict self-examination, and godly repentance, and the forsaking of sin, and holy resolutions of amendment, as indispensable pre-requisites for that reception. But ‘spiritual communion’ and ‘adoration’ require no such previous preparation. They exact no turning away from the world, the flesh and the devil with remorse and shame, and turning to God with the whole heart ; and yet he who spiritually communicates and adores is flattered by others

and perhaps by himself with the fond imagination that he is performing a religious exercise of the highest and holiest devotion. Verily, as the wise man says, 'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.'"¹

Pass next to Bishop Moberly, the very pattern of a staunch and scholarly High Churchman. I quote from his "Bampton Lectures" of 1868. Through twelve eloquent pages he dwells upon the fact that it is of the very essence of the Rite that it be a *κοινωνία*, a Communion. He goes further than I should myself venture to go in speaking against the presence of non-Communicants.² I do not give those words, but I quote a paragraph which I think fairly sums up the teaching given on this point in a Lecture which ought to be studied in its entirety. He has been speaking of the consecration of the Elements by the Priest, and he goes on thus:—

Bishop
Moberly.

And the other part of the sacred act is not less essential. The Church in its people must be there to receive, in repentance, in faith, and in charity, what by her Priest she consecrates and offers. Their part is as necessary to constitute and complete the Sacrament as his. . . . The sacrificial portion, if I may so call it, of the Sacrament has no being nor existence without the other portion, the Communion. The Communion is null and void of all its special spiritual blessing without the sacrifice. They are not two things. They are one thing only. . . . The people, rendering the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; offering, as priests themselves, their spirits, souls,

¹ *Miscellanies*, Vol. ii, pp. 157—162.

² Page 178, 3rd ed., 1883.

and bodies, as a rational, holy, and lively sacrifice to God ; partaking in the grace ; made more and more to be helpful as channels of the diffused Spirit ; responding to the words of the consecrating Priest ; supporting and confirming them by their audibly expressed assent ; in their hands and in their mouths receiving the sacred Elements ; in faith discerning the Lord's broken and life-giving Body,—all these are necessary to the completeness of the great joint act which the Church of God, not the Priest alone, performeth.¹

Preben-
dary
Sadler.

Turn next to Prebendary Sadler. He has, I suppose, done more to popularise the doctrines of the Prayer Book, regarded from the High Churchman's standpoint, than any teacher of our day. He writes as follows :—

The Anglican Service is at one with Scripture and with all ancient Liturgies in not containing any recognition of Holy Communion as a means of bringing Christ amongst us as an object of Divine worship. Holy Communion was ordained by Christ as the means whereby we are to partake of His Body and Blood, and as a perpetual commemoration before God of the Sacrifice on the Cross ; but there is no further purpose of the institution so much as hinted at by Christ or by His Apostles. The Fathers are equally ignorant of any such function of Holy Communion. . . . The reader has only to put the Canon of the Mass side by side with our own Service, and he will see at once that, notwithstanding the retention of some ancient forms, such as the "Sursum Corda," "Angelic Hymn," &c., the leading ideas of the two Services materially differ. Whereas the old Service is mainly a sacrificial rite, the new is mainly a Communion or partaking. Whereas in the old Services the commemoration or sacrificial action (or rather actions) is altogether severed from the partaking on the part of

¹ *Bampton Lectures*, 1868, pp. 167, 168, 3rd ed.

the people, in the new it is inseparably bound up with it. Whereas in the old Service the celebrant is everything, so that he can perform the whole action by himself, in the new, on the contrary, he is never contemplated apart from the united action of that mystical body of which he is the Minister.¹

I reserve to the last the evidence of Mr. Scudamore. His remarkable book, *Notitia Eucharistica*, is known, I suppose, to every student of our Liturgy.² His Sacramental teaching on such a matter as the doctrine of the Real Presence goes, I think, beyond that of Andrewes or Laud, and his learning is both deep and varied. To the question of non-communicating attendance he devotes great attention in his *Notitia*,³ and it is the main subject of his separate essay or volume on "*The Communion of the Laity*," to which I have already referred. He examines the whole question in the light of Holy Scripture, of the Primitive Church, of Patristic authority, of early and mediæval Canons and usages, of Reformation history, and of Post-Reformation teaching, both in our own Church and in the Church of Rome. What then are the conclusions to which he is led? I will quote his words :—

Rev. W. E.
Scuda-
more.

The evils that have resulted from the practice of "hearing Mass," both in the Middle Ages and since the reformation of our branch of the Church Catholic, have been so serious that it is a plain duty in those who know anything of them to

¹ *The Church and the Age*, first series, pp. 298-305.

² It should be noted that the Second Edition, 1876, contains much valuable matter not found in the First Edition.

³ Pages 433-447, 2nd ed.

protest against the attempt to revive that unprimitive and unscriptural custom among ourselves.¹

And again :—

We have thus briefly stated some of the grounds on which we conclude that those who do not communicate derive no special benefit from their presence at the Celebration. The Sacrifice is not imputed to them, because it is only through partaking that any one can appropriate it to himself. The Altar must be to us the Table of the Lord also, or it ceases to be an Altar. Rather may we not fear a further secret loss of grace and blessing, if we attempt to use the most holy ordinance of Christ in a manner, or for a purpose, which has no sanction from Holy Scripture or from the uninspired records of the Primitive Church ;²

Children's
Euchar-
ists.

Now I ask you to consider these passages ; to read, if you have opportunity, the context of the quotations, or the devout and scholarly arguments on which the conclusions rest ; and then to judge whether this matter does not call for serious and prayerful thought on the part of a good many of us. Already, for example, in some of our churches the school children are invited³ to be periodically present at the Eucharistic Service, and do, as a fact, attend it. There is nothing positively illegal in such attendance, nothing on which a Bishop could formally proceed. The Church is open

¹ *Notitia Eucharistica*, p. 440, 2nd ed.

² *Ibid.*, p. 447.

³ There is nowhere in this Diocese, as I confidently believe, an endeavour to make such attendance in any sense compulsory, or a condition of Sunday School membership. Such a rule would merit the gravest censure.

to all. But to me it seems simply impossible to reconcile the encouragement of such a custom with the teaching of our own Church, from the Reformation onwards, as to the character and significance of the Service of Holy Communion; while to find a parallel to it in the Primitive Church would obviously be out of the question.¹

I have examined many of the Manuals published for the use of children at Celebrations of Holy Communion. Some of them, so far as I can judge, must inevitably convey to a child's mind teaching to which the Church of England gives no sanction. How is a little child likely to interpret the announcement printed in large capitals between the Prayer of Humble Access and the Prayer of Consecration, "Jesus is coming," "Prepare to meet thy God"; or the statement printed at the close of the Prayer of Consecration, "You are now in the presence of Jesus: keep very still." I have reason to believe that the mischievous and misleading little book which contains these words is not in use anywhere in our Diocese. If there be such use, I emphatically desire its discontinuance. In some of the books and tracts advocating the attendance of non-Communicants, and professing to instruct uneducated people as to the history of the custom, I find statements made which it is not easy to characterise faithfully and yet with courtesy. Simple folk are told plainly and repeatedly that in the early Church such was the universal custom

Manuals
for
Children,

and for
adult non-
Communi-
cants.

¹ Of course the prevalence of the custom of Infant Communion carried with it the attendance of little children *as Communicants*. But the difference is fundamental.

or rule, and that in modern times the 'wretched commandments of men' persuaded our Church to drop 'these good old catholic and primitive' observances. The rubrics are interpreted as forbidding the clergy to celebrate "unless there be some persons present to join with them [i.e., as the context shows, as non-communicants] in this great Public Act of Worship of the Church." The practice is further advocated on the strength of the rubric about 'Spiritual Communion' appended to the office for the Communion of the Sick, the main sentence of that rubric being quoted as if it referred to "those who remain for the entire service" without communicating. How, I say, are we to characterise such publications as these? Yet they appear to have some circulation, and they can be bought for a few pence. I solemnly call upon you to guard your people to the utmost of your power from being misled by these noxious little books should they fall into their hands. Neither you nor I have power, in a free country, to prevent their sale; but we can warn our Sunday School teachers and others to be on the watch. We can—and it is probably the best remedy—supply instead what is sound and true. The danger is, unhappily, no new one. Twenty-four years ago, the Bishops of our Church issued a joint Pastoral Letter upon what they described as "serious evils disturbing the peace of the Church," and in the course of the Letter they used these words :

"More especially we call serious attention to the multiplication, and the assiduous circulation among the young and susceptible, of manuals of doctrine and private devotion, of which it is not

too much to say that many of the doctrines and practices they inculcate are wholly incompatible with the teaching and principles of our reformed Church.”¹

With all my heart do I echo these words to-day.

I have said nearly all that I had to say upon this point. Some may think that I have spoken unfairly or inconsiderately. I can assure you that my words are not unconsidered; I trust that they are not unfair. I recognise our difficulties to the full. I know that we all have before us the single purpose of so ministering the Sacraments of our Lord and Saviour as He would have us minister them to His children. The conditions of other days in England were different from the conditions of our own, and I do not want to press too rigidly that we must tread in the very footsteps of those who went before. But there are fundamental principles which underlie our Service. We have tried to trace them. They must be maintained inviolate. Let the principle be made secure, and kept constantly in our people’s sight and thoughts, and then some exceptions can be introduced without harm. I have been dealing with principles, tendencies, general teaching, rather than with hide-bound rules. Occasions present themselves easily to our mind on which the presence of non-Communicants at the Eucharistic Service may be not harmless only but in every way appropriate.

Let fundamental principles be followed,

and exceptions may readily be sanctioned.

For example, the multiplication of Celebrations of Holy Communion to suit the needs of parishioners

¹ Pastoral Letter, 1st March, 1875. It is reprinted in extenso in *Archbishop Tait’s Life*, Vol. ii. pp. 271—275.

necessitates in most parishes the habitual presence of clergy who, though taking part in the Service for the good of all, do not themselves communicate at that hour.

Or again, a Choral Celebration of Holy Communion, when those who are reverently giving thought and pains to leading the music of prayer and praise and thanksgiving have themselves communicated at another hour ; or, if too young to be themselves Communicants, are learning the privilege of giving help to those engaged in the highest act of worship.

Or a congregation present in a Cathedral at some special Service, say, the Consecration of a Bishop, or the Ordination of Priests and Deacons, when the great company of those immediately concerned, relatives and friends perhaps of those ordained, are helped in their solemn Communion by the presence and the prayers of others. You may see such services in London many times every year, when to dismiss all those who do not then communicate would be a mistake indeed.

Or in individual life. It may happen to us again and again to wish, for some reason, to be present at a mid-day Eucharist when we have communicated at an earlier hour. To forbid or discourage such occasional presence would be to insist pedantically upon the letter, not the spirit, of what our Church has taught us. I am always glad, for example, that children, before their first Communion, should have been present once or twice at least with parents or friends, so as to understand the Service, and thus be better able, when

themselves communicating for the first time, to give undistracted thought to the solemn privilege they are allowed to share.

It would be easy to multiply examples of the sort of case in which the presence of non-Communicants is permissible or more than permissible. There is nothing in the Prayer Book to bid every non-Communicant withdraw. What we lay stress upon is a principle, not a minute and inexorable rule. The principle rests on the teaching of Holy Scripture and the experience long and varied of the Church of Christ.

You will remember, my brethren, what I stated to be my purpose in this Address. I am deliberately not dealing with the Church of England's Eucharistic teaching as a whole. Indeed, I have tried, so far as possible, both in my own words and in the ample quotations I have laid before you, to avoid entering at all upon the deeper doctrines of the Holy Eucharist, upon the nature of the Lord's Presence in His Sacrament, or upon what is sometimes known as the "objective" character of the great Service which He ordained. It is not that I think such discussions to be either needless or unprofitable. What I have tried to say has of necessity touched upon the borderland of those deep disputations. But it intentionally goes no further. You will not suppose it to follow that I am forgetful of that other side of our Sacramental Service, or that I ignore or slight the reality and the profound significance of our joint presentation and pleading of His full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for us upon the Cross whensoever the Eucharist is celebrated. The act of Communion can no more be severed from that

"Objective" character of the Service not forgotten.

sacrificial portion, if we so call it,¹ of the Sacrament, than can the sacrificial portion stand apart, as some would have it stand, from the Communion. But it is with the latter only, and its inherent place in the whole, that we have dealt to-day.

Church of
England
principles
are sound.

Much time has been spent, but not, I hope, ill-spent in looking with care into these particulars about what we may call the people's part in the Office of Holy Communion. We have asked, and tried to answer, the question whether there is any danger nowadays of our reverting to errors which, by the help of God, the Church of England successfully vanquished within her own borders more than two hundred years ago. It is where the principle of the people's Communion, as an essential part of the Eucharistic Service, has been slighted and ignored, that the other principles of the English Reformation, the principles of simplicity and openness and freedom from superstition, are apt to be imperilled too. The history of the Church in other lands rings out for us a warning note. The sturdy common-sense of most English Churchmen will, I think, respond to that warning. We have a wholesome dislike of needless obscurity or of a recondite esoteric symbolism in our Eucharistic Rite. Superstition does not fit in well with the national characteristics God has given us. Such attempts as are sometimes made to adapt to our own Liturgy the minute Fifteenth Century Rubrics of Sarum or Hereford may be ascribed to a wish to mark the outward continuity of the Church

¹ For the use of this term see the quotation from Bishop Moberly above given (p. 83).

rather than to any genuine love on the part of Priest or people for an elaborate or fussy ceremonial. In my next address I shall have occasion to say something about these details. For the present I content myself with counselling you to remember that dignity and reverence may easily be sacrificed rather than helped. We have inherited in our Liturgy a Service strong in its Scriptural phraseology and tone, strong in its genuine and reverent simplicity, strong in its tacit appeal to the reason and intelligence of the worshipper. Do not, I beseech you, do anything to mar these characteristics. Does any one allege that, by omitting the elaboration of gesture and act prescribed in Rubrics other than our own, we diminish the reverence paid to our Blessed Lord present with us in His Sacrament? Rather we multiply that reverence tenfold, if we are worshipping Him aright. Simplicity can help, not hinder, the deepest possible devotion of body, soul, and spirit. It consists with the most eager care for seemliness and decorum in every particular. Such characteristics are distinctive, in all Christendom, of our English Liturgy. *Spartam nactus es : hanc exorna.*

My brothers, go below the surface ; pierce to the reality. After all, the one thing needful is that we should all care more than we do for the Blessed Sacrament of the Saviour's love. If we venerate aright that great gift to our souls of His Body and His Blood, we cannot venerate it too much. We may remember thankfully that the very mistakes into which men fall have their source in the desire to make something more than we are apt to make of that incomparable blessing. For

The one
thing
needful.

one of us who transgresses our Church's rule in the manner of celebrating or worshipping, there are ten, there are fifty, who fall short of the enthusiasm which ought to set our hearts aflame as we "show the Lord's death till He come." May the consideration we are trying to give to some of these details serve, by His blessing, to inspire and arouse each of us to a more eager, trustful, expectant use of those Divine means of Grace whereof we are privileged to be the ministrants to men. Our Communion with Him is the secret, not only of pardon and peace, but of hopefulness and strength. We have duties, often anxious and perplexing, to discharge for Him. We grow weak and weary in the task. As experience ripens and the shadows lengthen, let us pray Him to teach us—all together in His Society on earth, and one by one in our secret hearts—to know that which passeth knowledge, the exceeding greatness of His ever ready gift for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls.

PRESENT DIFFICULTIES.

WHAT I have hitherto said has mainly concerned two subjects at present prominently before the Church—the use and abuse of Private Confession, and the danger of the spread of certain erroneous views and practices in connection with the Holy Communion. I can imagine some men looking with wonder or scorn or amusement on the fact that in face of all the other matters pressing clamorously for attention in connection with the morals, the education, and the social life of the English people, a Bishop should devote so large a proportion of his Visitation Addresses to two such matters only. I have done it deliberately: partly because I think it is difficult to exaggerate their intrinsic importance, partly because of the confusion and misunderstanding existing in many minds upon both these subjects; but mainly because it seems to me that a clear recognition and acceptance of sound principles upon such questions will be helpful in a great range of kindred subjects affecting the religion, and therefore the morals of our people.

It is impossible for us, the ministers of Christ, the officers of the National Church, to do aright the work

Evil of
partisan
strife.

to which God calls us, if we are distraught by controversies, always anxious, sometimes noisy, ignorant, and fanatical on either side, about the way in which the truths of our Faith should be brought to bear upon the daily life of the people. Religious controversies and discussions, when reasonably conducted by qualified men, have no doubt as useful and even necessary a place in the contemporary life of our Church as they had in its early or mediæval history. But to this end the condition must be satisfied that they be reasonably conducted by qualified men. If not, they may do incalculable harm. We have seen it in the last eighteen months. Passions have been needlessly inflamed, and the relation to one another of Christian workers has been embittered without adequate cause. The result is a widespread feeling of unrest, of feverishness, of dissatisfaction, of mutual suspicion, hurtful almost beyond words to the work we all have at heart—the advance in England of the kingdom of our Blessed Lord, the bettering, by our ministry, of the every-day life of the English people.

Need of
unity in
face of
foes.

It is sometimes well, at a time of controversy like the present, that we should try calmly to estimate the genuine, intrinsic importance of the points about which English Churchmen are at variance, asking what proportion they bear to the points or principles on which we are all agreed. If you have followed what in my addresses I have hitherto tried to say, you will not think I make little of the issues at stake in some few of our present-day disputations. The matters we have discussed are scarcely less than vital. But, on the

other hand, I seldom sit down to think over, or kneel down to pray over, a single day's episcopal work and correspondence without the thought occurring : In how large a proportion of these arguments and quarrels and complaints the disputants are really in closer agreement than they suppose. The differences are so often merely skin deep, or, to use another figure, the waves raised by angry gusts are tossing fretfully on the surface of a great river ; but down a few feet below the surface the water is flowing steadily on, undisturbed by the boisterous splashings on the top. It is difficult to realise this, either for ourselves or others. Cast your thoughts forward half a century ; try to imagine how some of our present difficulties about Ritual and Courts will look when those who are now schoolboys fill our places as bald or grey-headed men. By that time quite other lines of cleavage will, I venture to think, be severing groups of thinking men from one another : questions vitally affecting the great realities of life : Is there a God Who can hear and speak to me ? Will my life end when I am put into the grave ? Was Jesus Christ merely the best of men ? Has there been in a true sense any Revelation given to man ? Is what we call morality really a binding duty, and if so, why ?

Such voices grow louder. The conflict thickens round us as the years pass, and though happily the issue is not doubtful, the sharpness of the strife, be it against wickedness or against unbelief, calls imperatively on the whole Church to stand shoulder to shoulder. You will remember perhaps the account Josephus gives of what was happening in Jerusalem while the Roman

eagles were mustering not far off. "There was a bitter contest," he says, "within the city. . . . Every one associated with those of his own opinion, and they began already to stand in opposition one to another, so that seditions arose everywhere, while those that were for innovations and were desirous of war by their youth and boldness were too hard for the aged and prudent men." ¹

Points at
issue
sometimes
trifling.

Already, as you know, some of the most thoughtful of our English contemporaries ask in honest bewilderment how it is possible that we whose special task it ought to be to guide men's thoughts aright, can expend all this energy over the particular disputes which have been filling our newspapers, when enemies so formidable are on the march or at the gate. This wonder may be misplaced. Such a critic may be failing to estimate at its actual value the connection between some ritual act and the doctrine which lies behind it. But at the least his surprise should "give us pause." It should force us to ask ourselves and one another whether there be indeed a danger that the strife which turns at first upon a few large questions, may degenerate at times into petty altercations about mint, anise and cummin, and that we may thus come to forget the proportions of the whole. A stranger to the subject, reading some of the controversial literature of this last year, would find it hard to believe that on the great mass of Christian verities the opponents are absolutely at one. Nay, sometimes they themselves surely forget that the

¹ *Wars of the Jews*, Book IV. chap. iii. § 2. Whiston's Translation, Vol. ii. p. 343.

whole area of strife, magnify it as you will, is but a comparatively insignificant corner in the religious field we occupy in common.

And another thought treads close upon the heels of this. The outside critic who hears the thud of every doughty blow, and half contemptuously watches the combatants splintering their lances in hot strife, imagines these frays to be the main thing for which the fighters care. We know better. We know how often it is true to say that in the man's own life and ministry these things, greatly as he cares about them, are comparative trifles after all, that the real fight on which his heart is set is the fight against sin and devilry and ignorance and unbelief. Only he is waging that battle so continuously that it has ceased to give matter for a newspaper paragraph, and is forgotten by the onlooker just because it is taken as matter of course. And yet somehow these things would not be said, these misrepresentations would not take place, unless there were something to give rise to the blunder. Unfair criticism—my brothers, I find it so myself every week—is a useful and helpful thing, or, at least, it may be made so. It should set us thinking what it can be that we have said or done which could thus be distorted, what grounds, reasonable or unreasonable, we can have given to the critic. It should remind us how easy it is to discredit our Master's cause in unfriendly eyes by that false proportion between great things and small, against which St. Paul raised his voice so often.

None the less however is it our duty, in face of all that needs doing in the world, to mend these mischiefs,

be they great or small, and to allay these hampering fretful strifes, if by God's grace we may.

At present they cluster mainly round the forms of our Services of prayer and praise. It is noteworthy, and not altogether discouraging, to see how keen and widespread an interest such questions can arouse. One wonders whether it would be equally possible in any other land.

History of
the present
strife.

Contemporary history is proverbially difficult to remember, and it may not be out of place to recall in a short, dry form what has been happening before our eyes. Let me put it in the consecutive shape the story might take under the hands of an historian, say half a century hence.

In the year 1897, as the Archbishop of Canterbury in a subsequent speech explained, it had become clear to the Bishops that some check was necessary if the unique liberty enjoyed by English parish priests as to the variety and arrangement of Church Services was not to degenerate in a few places into mischievous irregularity. While this whole matter was under consideration, a spark was set to the tinder by unseemly disturbances which arose in one or two London churches about the use of certain "Special Services" not in character with the tone of the Book of Common Prayer. Controversy grew hot and general, and the difficulties of a quiet and reasonable exercise of authority were proportionally increased. It became clear, indeed, before many months had passed, that as regards the "Special Services" themselves no serious obstacle to an orderly settlement would anywhere be found; but in the meantime the

flames spread rapidly to other and deeper matters, the very matters which had been under consideration when the first disturbances arose. Inflammatory meetings were held; inflammatory literature was circulated broadcast. Discussions took place in both Houses of Parliament, and the accusers virtually extended their attack against the whole line of the High Church party, or against those at least who professed themselves disciples of the Oxford movement of fifty years before. The Bishops were loudly accused of having neglected to restrain excesses, and especially of having shielded wrongdoers from legitimate punishment by an unsparing use of their legal power of veto in cases of prosecution. They were clamorously called upon to insist immediately upon such changes as should satisfy the promoters of the agitation against what was somewhat vaguely called Ritualism, and, in the event of non-compliance on the part of those impugned, to put the machinery of the law in motion. On the part of the Bishops the reply was given, that though grave irregularities in the conduct of Divine Service undoubtedly existed in some parishes, this was not due to any concerted resolve on the Bishops' part to abstain from interference, but simply to a general dislike on the part of the whole Church—Bishops, Clergy and laity—of the legal coercion which had been attempted twenty years before, and to a desire to fall back upon gentler methods. The endeavours thus to restrain excesses by quiet influence rather than by compulsion had been only in part successful, and further action by the Bishops had been under consideration at the very

time when the disturbances arose. As regards the Bishops' legal veto, it was a simple mistake of fact to suppose that it had been used to prohibit reasonable access on the part of the laity to the Courts of the Church. This was made clear by a Parliamentary Return, which was called for by the House of Commons, and which showed, when published, that of the thirty-five living Diocesan Bishops, three only had ever in any circumstances exercised the statutory power of veto.¹

Such was, in general terms, the Bishops' contention in reply to those who challenged their administration of the Church's affairs. Among them, as among other Churchmen, lay and clerical, there was naturally some difference of opinion as to the dimensions of the existing mischief, and as to the manner in which to set right what was amiss. No one, however, disputed the fact that action of some sort was required.

The whole position was complicated by the long-standing difficulty as to the constitution of the Ecclesiastical Courts. Very few people regarded them as quite satisfactory, and not a few of the Clergy thought themselves justified in declining to recognise their full authority. In these circumstances the Archbishops and Bishops took two steps. They brought before Convocation for discussion a scheme for a remodelled system of Courts, on the lines recommended by the Royal Commission in 1883; and, further, the two Archbishops undertook to give formal and public hearing to any arguments which might be urged by Clergy whose cases of

¹ See Appendix C.

alleged disobedience to the Prayer Book should be referred to the Archbishops by Diocesan Bishops under the provision in the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer.

Such, my Reverend Brethren, is, I hope and think, a fair summary of the plain history of the facts up to the point at which we stand to-day. The attempt to reconstruct our Ecclesiastical Courts is still before Convocation, and it is clear that further discussion is required before we can reach such a position as would enable us to introduce a Bill in Parliament with reasonable prospect of success. The rubrical questions referred to the Archbishops have been duly argued at Lambeth, and on two points, the Liturgical use of Incense and the carrying of Lights in procession, the Archbishops have already made public the conclusion to which they came.

I am not going to discuss these Ritual matters in detail. To do so, except with regard to such fundamental questions as those which occupied my last address, would be contrary to the principle I have endeavoured consistently to follow: the principle that all minor questions as to the conduct of Divine Service ought, at least in the first instance, to be separately and locally considered, and that the communications between the Bishop and each parish should be of a private and personal kind. It suits the purpose of controversial writers, and perhaps of newspaper editors, to drag into the arena of public strife and criticism any such question arising in a parish. I could from my personal knowledge give instances in more than one diocese in which

Ritual controversies.

Our
Diocesan
action.

petty irregularities or difficulties, which might have been, and doubtless would have been, quietly settled by the Bishop's private intervention, have, by the mischievous agency of partisan controversy, grown to large dimensions, with consequences infinitely hurtful to the Church. In this diocese we have specially tried to avoid that peril. You will all remember what occurred last Spring. On February 22nd, I addressed a circular letter to each of our 566 incumbents, calling attention to what was described in the letter as "a wider variety of usage and ceremonial in the Church than can legitimately be brought within the limits defined by our existing rubrics." I specified twelve liturgical points which had given rise to controversy, and stated in each case what is, to the best of my judgment, the rule of the Church of England. From those whose usage was already in harmony with my view I asked for no reply, but I went on to say :

If you feel a difficulty on any one of the points I have mentioned, in bringing your usage into harmony with this interpretation of the Rubrics, I would ask you kindly to write to me *at once* upon the matter, specifying the difficulty. I will then gladly consider with you the facts and circumstances, and give you such counsel, guidance, or formal direction as may be required. Exceptional arrangements may be called for in exceptional circumstances, and to any such I will give my deliberate consideration.

The letter was marked "private" to prevent publication, but it was rightly shown without restraint to Churchwardens and others. It may interest you to know the issue. I received 176 replies. They

came from men of every school of thought. Some of the points submitted to me, whether of excess or defect, were the merest trifles; others were of solid importance. I have reason to think that no case of grave irregularity was withheld from my notice. To each of these 176 correspondents I replied, sending a memorandum of advice upon the particular point or points he had referred to. If my direction or explanation satisfied or convinced him, I asked for no further reply. If not, I expressed my readiness to see him or to write to him more fully. Of the 176 who had written to me, this reply proved sufficient to all but fifteen. With each of these fifteen I was subsequently in communication; and there are, at this moment, only a very few parishes in which Ritual matters still remain seriously unsettled.

It is, I think, worth while thus to summarise what has been passing in our own Diocese. Comments have all the while been rife and loud to the effect that at a time of widespread disquiet and dissatisfaction, the Bishops have been taking no steps. Now, what has happened in this Diocese has, in some form, no doubt been happening in others. But it has purposely been done "not with observation." I have received many letters, some of them from wise and trusted friends, to the effect that what was wanted was *public* disciplinary action to repress irregularity. I have never denied that circumstances may arise which call ultimately in particular cases for such action. But I am absolutely convinced that we have in this Diocese been right in proceeding first in the way we did. There

is now no reason why my circular letters on which so much has turned should not be made public, and I append them to this Charge, together with some of the memoranda which have proved helpful as to particular usages or Ritual points.¹

The diffi-
culty is not
over.

You will not suppose me to imply that either in this Diocese or any other our Ritual difficulties are over, or that at this moment the Prayer Book Rubrics are being simply, and without challenge, obeyed. Such a statement would utterly misrepresent the facts. The whole situation is complicated and difficult in a high degree. In the first place, apart from any question either of doctrine on the one hand or of expediency on the other, it would, as a plain matter of fact, be worse than futile to attempt such enforcement of absolute uniformity. That there must be elasticity here and there is evident to every competent student of our present difficulties. Literal rigid compliance with every Rubric of 1662 would—even if it were possible—be intolerable, and to none more intolerable than to some of those whose complaints of “lawlessness” are now most loudly and conscientiously expressed.

“Uni-
formity.”

We may say, with reasonable certainty, that there never was a single year in the history of the Church of England when, in the conduct of Divine Service, the “use” was absolutely and rigidly uniform in every parish throughout the land. The sentence in Cranmer’s Preface that “now from henceforth all the whole Realm shall have but one use,” or the phrase “and none other or otherwise,” in Queen Elizabeth’s Act of Uniformity

¹ See Appendix D.

—important, deliberate, and definite as they were—must always have been so interpreted as to cover the trifling deviations which custom sanctioned, or which temporary conditions made necessary, and it has often been pointed out how considerable a variety is possible, under the letter of our Rubrics, with respect to the details of several of our prescribed services. No doubt, as years pass, and the social conditions of life change, and populations increase, these deviations have, *ipso facto*, even apart from religious questions, a tendency to grow wider. Local customs, unquestioned perhaps for generations, stiffen into rules, and an attempt to revive the unmistakable provisions of some long-disregarded rubric has many a time been resented as a lawless innovation. The experience of the older among us will supply abundant examples, and the lesson should at present be serviceable on more sides than one.

The controversial literature of the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. gives abundant evidence, if any were required, as to the gulf which separated the High Church and Low Church Services of those contentious days,¹ and I suppose it would not be an exaggeration to say that, from the date of our existing Prayer Book onwards, it has always been possible to find in use within the Church two really distinct types of Divine Service, neither of them violating the Rubrics as they

¹ For references and examples see Perry's *History of the Church of England*, vol. iii., p. 165, &c. Also Overton, *Life in the English Church from 1660—1714*, Chap. iv., and Abbey and Overton's *English Church in the 18th Century*, vol. ii., 460—482 and *passim*.

stand, but each of them, if we may use such an expression, "presenting" the Book of Common Prayer in its own way. So it is to-day. It is perfectly conceivable that a persevering complainant from either camp in the present controversy might successfully insist upon and secure the compliance of his parish priest with every rubric in the Prayer Book, without thereby producing at all the sort of service he himself desires to see. Looking back across the last two centuries, it is hard to exaggerate the good we have secured from our rule of Uniformity in Public Worship. But it is a rule which has to be interpreted by reasonable men who know the varying needs with which they have to deal.

Variety is
essential,

He who remembers the differences of temperament, of taste, of religious sympathy and tone, which separate the devotional life of one Christian man from the devotional life of another; he who knows how music may be the profoundest help to the prayers of one man and be a positive hindrance to the prayers of another; he who has friends who are uplifted and strengthened by the æsthetic beauty of architecture or colour, and other friends to whom such things at a time of Divine Service are uninteresting or distracting; will surely recognise that, in a Church like ours, and especially in our large towns, such variety of usage, within reasonable limits, is not only tolerable but even necessary.

but subject
to the
guidance
of
authority.

The question is how best to decide for the good of all, whether, in any particular case, the limits of legitimate freedom have been overstepped; whether any

principle has been violated, any well-established decision upon a doubtful matter contravened, any reasonable ground given for complaint. A general discretion, based on such considerations, must rest with somebody. The framers of our existing laws saw this when they deliberately provided for what is known as the Bishops' veto. Whether the discretion entrusted to the Bishops has or has not been wisely used either in ordinary administration or with respect to the legal veto, is a fair matter for discussion. But how anybody can suppose it to be possible that, while our Rubrics remain what they are, we could take such a discretion away from the Bishops without transferring it to some other authority, I find it difficult to imagine. It is with such principles in mind that I, for one, have tried to deal with each question that has come before me in these matters during my Episcopate.

Of course it may sometimes be better that a doubtful point of interpretation should be definitely and authoritatively decided, and the Prayer Book Preface "Concerning the Services of the Church" provided for a formal reference, if need be, to the Archbishop of the Province. This right of reference, if we may call it so, has rarely been used, and if I correctly understand the object of our present Archbishops in giving fresh vitality to such appeal (I use the word in no technical sense), it was intended to satisfy those who, for whatever reason, were neither prepared to regard the dictum of their Diocesan as final, nor inclined to refer the matter to the arbitrament

The Arch-
bishops'
"Hear-
ing."

of our present Ecclesiastical Courts. In what is described as the "Hearing" at Lambeth, a public opportunity was given for the amplest arguments to be brought forward on behalf of those to whose Ritual usages their own Diocesan had taken exception, and the opportunity was heartily welcomed and admirably used. The conclusion arrived at by the Archbishops after hearing such arguments must presumably be regarded as binding by those who argued their case before these highest representatives of purely spiritual authority. But there has been no withdrawal from the Diocesan Bishops of their separate and direct responsibility for Diocesan administration; and in the formal directions or injunctions I have myself had occasion to issue since the Archbishops' conclusion or decision was published, I have taken care to speak with the full responsibility attaching to my own office as Diocesan, and not as one who had blindly to endorse an Arch-Episcopal decree, great as must be the influence exercised on the mind of every loyal Churchman by an interpretation emanating from so august a quarter.

Recon-
struction
of Eccle-
siastical
Courts.

And this leads me to say something—it shall be very brief—about the reconstruction of our Ecclesiastical Courts. I have never been one of those who thought that that matter could, with common fairness to lay Churchmen, be allowed to slumber. For sixteen years, —ever since, that is, the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission,—I have ventured to press, both in Convocation and elsewhere, for vigorous forward action upon the lines of that Report. It is discreditable to

our Church that we should acquiesce in a condition, so far as our Final Court is concerned, of virtual anarchy.

It is not that I am eager to secure some one particular solution of the difficulties. I hope I shall not seem to derogate from the importance of the principles involved if I say that in my view there are at least four or five rival schemes, any one of which we might reasonably accept, and any one of which would, I think, be found to work smoothly in practice.

I have consistently supported the plan which was drafted in the Report signed by a large majority of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, and which was, with some modifications, embodied five years later in the Bill prepared by Archbishop Benson, after prolonged discussion with a Committee of leading laymen. It provides, as you will remember, for the strengthening of our Diocesan and Provincial Courts, and for an appeal from the Provincial Court to the Crown, who shall refer the question to a Committee of highly-qualified lay Churchmen, such Committee being bound, before advising the Crown upon the matter, to obtain, upon any particular point of doctrine or Ritual which is in controversy, the opinion of the whole English Episcopate specially summoned for the purpose.

This plan appears to me to be a fair one from every point of view; and sound constitutional principles would, I think, be best maintained if the Crown, on receiving the Report of the Committee, were to remit the matter to the Provincial Court, who should pronounce the ultimate sentence. Such a scheme admits of the

possibility that the Crown might be advised by its Committee to decide the question in a manner opposed to the opinion of the Bishops; and in the judgment of many good men this possibility condemns the scheme as unsound. To me, I confess, such a possibility appears to be no worse than many other possibilities inherent in the system of an Established Church. It is always conceivable, however improbable, that the supreme Civil authority, be it legislative or judicial, may come to some decision so clearly opposed to the opinion of the Church as such, that mutual co-operation is no longer possible. The conditions upon which the Civil Power maintains the privilege, or in some matters the monopoly, granted to the Church may be found by the Church in its corporate capacity to be intolerable, and the system of mutual co-operation which we call Establishment may thereupon have to come to an end. It has become the fashion lately to speak of the system of the Established Church of Scotland as providing security against this sort of conflict. But, curiously enough, it was in Scotland under the existing system that the only modern instance of such a difficulty did actually occur. Had the whole General Assembly in 1843, instead of only a large minority of the Assembly, repudiated the decision arrived at by the Civil Power, one of two alternatives must presumably have ensued,—Legislation in the direction the Church desired, or Disestablishment. Where an Established Church exists, such a contingency must always be within the range of possibility, and I cannot myself see that the recognition of that

fact involves any disloyalty to even the sternest principles of Churchmanship. The Church, through her constituted authorities, must always have the power or the right of declining to give effect to some deliberate decision of the State; and thereupon, unless the State consents to a legislative readjustment of the position, what is called Establishment must come to an end. I do not believe that any scheme of Ecclesiastical Courts can be devised which, while preserving, in however shadowy a form, what we call the Royal Supremacy, would make impossible the contingency I have referred to. But of course, we who believe in the maintenance, under proper conditions, of an Established Church, desire to reduce to a minimum the probability, or even possibility, of such a conflict. If, therefore, by modifying the proposals contained in Archbishop Benson's Bill, we can make this remote contingency yet more remote, without thereby forfeiting the possibility of passing the Bill into law, I, for one, should gladly fall in with such proposals.

As a matter of fact, I think the probability is exceedingly small, that, with our Diocesan and Provincial Courts strengthened in the manner proposed, any appeal to the Crown would ever occur. If it did occur, the probability that a point of doctrine or Ritual would be decided by the Committee of Council in one way and by the united Episcopate in another way is, I think, almost inconceivably remote. If so strange a conflict ever does arise I have no fear whatever as to our being able adequately to meet it.

In the meantime what we have to do is to provide a working plan which shall enable the Bishops to use

their constitutional authority with the knowledge that there lies in the background a duly graded series of Ecclesiastical Courts of such a kind as to secure that, if perforce the tribunal has to be appealed to, the decisions given will secure the loyal obedience and respect both of the Clergy and the laity. I decline to believe—it would be humiliating to believe—that this is unattainable.

“Spiri-
tual”
authority.

A fallacy seems to me to underlie the oft-repeated dictum that spiritual matters must be decided by a spiritual authority. I cordially assent to the proposition if it means that in the last resort a decision affecting Christian Doctrine or the Ritual which expresses Doctrine must, if it is to bind Christian men *in foro conscientiæ*, be a decision consistent with the Church's own view of what is true in Doctrine or appropriate in Ritual, and must not be a decision forced upon an unwilling Church by any body or power external to or independent of the Church. But if it means, as it sometimes seems to mean, that the Christian laity, even when acting through duly accredited representatives, have no voice in the decision of such controversies, I believe it to be as false in theory as it would be mischievous in practice. The more determinedly that we force the matter back to “first principles,” the more likely shall we be to arrive at a true and reasonable solution of present problems in the Church of England.

My brothers : I would fain hope I have said enough, for this Visitation at least, about such matters, and that

I may be allowed to pass thankfully on, for the time left to me to-day, to things of more real importance.

These endless, puzzling, irritating controversies about Courts and vetos, about Canonical obedience, and Lambeth "hearings," and a score of kindred things, loom large, no doubt, in our Church newspapers, our Conferences, our gatherings, lay and clerical, nay, even in our chance conversations with one another.

Work
more
important
than con-
troversy.

And yet, and yet—for most of us—how remote and insignificant comparatively is their bearing upon the actual daily work for our Master which we are set to do, and are indeed, in our measure doing with all our hearts, as the weeks and months and years roll on, and we draw nearer to the time when we must give account 'to Him for it all! How utterly "the man in the street" misunderstands us if he supposes (as I fear he often does) that these controversies are the matters about which, in our inmost hearts, we Clergy are caring most, or which we bring to our Lord in our daily prayers!

Here we find ourselves put, for a few short years, at a momentous epoch in English history, and therefore in the History of Christendom, with the task, the inspiring task, entrusted to us of bringing the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ into living touch with dusty human lives, and showing people, if we can, how that Revelation of the immeasurable love God has for them can make their homes, nay can make themselves, quite different from what they could have been if He had never come. Nothing lower, nothing less than that is the magnificent trust He has Himself given to us His Ministers. For that trust it is that we do care: to the discharge of

Our
trust—

that trust it is that our lives are devoted. Most inadequately have we fulfilled it. Most inadequately was it fulfilled, nay, sometimes it was hardly attempted, by those who filled our places here a little time ago. The apathy, the indifference, the good-humoured tolerance with which our message is commonly received, where they are not (as they often are) the result of our own faults and feeblenesses, may be the heritage left us by lazy or incompetent or faithless predecessors.

especially
for the
children

If such be our excuse—and it is sometimes a true excuse—as regards the elderly or middle-aged folk, we cannot fairly plead it as regards the young. In the very forefront of the charge committed to us is the care for the children in our schools. When they reach the meridian of their lives what will they have to tell as to the ideals set before them at the dawn? Was it brought home to them from the outset that life is worth living because of the strength and brightness and beauty of which it is, by God's grace, capable here and now; because it is part of something larger than we see; and because Jesus Christ has redeemed it and ennobled it, and enriched it in every working home by His example, His presence, and His trust? To put it thus may sound perhaps exaggerated and out of place when we pass in thought from the ideal to the actual; when we recall to mind the very ordinary commonplace children with whom we have daily to do in school and home and village street. But it is surely what Christ does see, and mean, and plan for those young lives, and

what He commits now to our keeping and our development.

Taking the Diocese of Winchester as a whole, and omitting, as requiring separate consideration, our two great towns of Portsmouth and Southampton, it is true to say that the mass of our children are educated in Church Schools, and start in life with such stamp—such “character” in the true and original sense of the word—as we in those schools have been able to impress upon them. Face that fact on a great scale, and consider the answerableness it leaves upon our shoulders for what the people in this part of England will be like when the first quarter of the next century has struck. I have been looking patiently, eagerly, through the Visitation Returns from all our parishes for signs of fresh plans, new experiments, to meet the changed conditions which encompass us. I will not say that I have found none, but, to say the least, there is abundant room for more.

in our
schools.

Let me recall to you in briefest words some of the factors in the problem as it stands to-day. They will not, I think, be challenged, whatever conclusion may be drawn from them.

Present
factors
in the
problem.

First, according to the ordinary criterion of education, the children, say at ten years of age, are better educated than they were a few years ago. The average age at which a child reaches, say, the fifth standard is now much lower than it used to be. That means that the ordinary child on leaving school has a much better basis of capacity for learning more than was usual a little while ago.

Secondly. Our teachers, speaking generally, are more capable, are themselves better educated, are more keen and thoughtful on the whole subject.

Thirdly. Our school managers are, in larger numbers, interested in the matter. There are more of them who are awake to their responsibilities and prepared to take pains.

Fourthly. The rules of the Education Department are more elastic. The Inspector has himself more liberty as to what he may permit or do, and he allows to the managers and teachers a freedom of range and practice which quite recently was unknown.

With these conditions, then, to deal with, we find the schools entrusted to us afresh, the financial difficulties lightened, the denominational basis no longer seriously threatened, and, so to speak, a free hand given us for doing our best.

What
Education
means.

We realise, as soon as we try to view the matter fairly, that the very most we can hope to accomplish, in a school life which ends at the age of twelve or thirteen, is to prepare the child in those few years to carry on—we might almost say to begin—afterwards, what can in a truer sense be called Education. We have furnished, or ought to have furnished by that time, the mental tools, and shown the child how to use them. The appalling thing is that, as matters stand, the child is apt to stop there. Its parents and it are agreed in ignorantly, stupidly supposing that it has, as we falsely put it, “got a good education,” instead of having merely got the means of using properly the opportunities of real education which will now begin.

If by "Education" we meant merely "book learning," it would be obvious to reply that with the daily hours of manual labour which lie before it, the child will have no opportunity to speak of for carrying on the education of those school years. But if we could properly enlarge for ourselves and for others the idea of what Education means; could get people to believe that powers of body and mind, aye and of soul, are to go on being steadily evoked, *e-ducated*, by the daily use, in field or shop or household, of the intelligence which the drudgery of school standards has polished and sharpened; and if we could further provide, within the reach of all, some kind of intellectual opportunity, however slender, which should prevent the once sharp edge from getting blunted and useless,—if we could do that, why, in a few years the homes and lives of England's manual workers would be transformed, transfigured into shapes and capacities as yet unknown.

You will understand that I am not speaking of something that can be effected to-day or to-morrow, or next year, or perhaps for the next ten years. But a Visitation is an occasion for estimating after a term of years, and before another term of years, where it is we stand. I am trying rather to express what we all feel about what might be, than to suggest in any ready form how the ideal can be prosaically put in to practice. But the ideal must come first, must be assimilated and become ours, before we shall have the inspiration for translating it into any actual work.

What seems to me certain is, that among the country Clergy of England, if anywhere, the men for accom-

Ideals
precede
action.

Rural
migration.

plishing such a task ought to be found. In a Diocese like this we have forced upon us, in rural parish after rural parish, the painful fact that the best of our young people find country life intolerably dull and escape from it whenever they can. Need this mischievous migration go on? Why is the country life more dull to them than it was to their parents? We have half a score of answers offered; but the truest seems to be this—that they have, so to speak, been furnished with tools which they have no means of using where they are, and they fancy, perhaps mistakenly, that life in a town will give them a better opportunity. It is our business to face that difficulty and to find the remedy, for remedy there must surely be. Have our efforts been adequate? What place do the Continuation Schools take in our rural districts, or even in our towns? On what scale are they in use? Is it that they have had a full and honest trial and have failed? They are capable, of course, of almost endless variety to suit local or personal needs and powers and acquirements and demands. How far is it true to say, as sometimes it is unkindly said, that a great many of us simply take for granted that they are unworkable in our rural districts, and let matters alone?

Confer-
ence is
required.

The subject is one which tempts me to run on. But this is not the occasion. What I venture to hope may be possible is that we should have some Conferences in different neighbourhoods upon the matter, that such Conferences may result in experiments of a varied sort, and that such experiments may, by the help of God, bear fruit. It is no mere desire upon our part to stay a

migration which may or may not have its wholesome side. We think of deeper, higher things. We want to see the growth of those young lives—body, mind and soul—go healthily on, go on in such a way as must vivify and brighten and uplift home life, whether in town or country. It is simply inconceivable that it can be the will of God that the sunny lad who leaves a village school at twelve years old, knowing what he does know, should sink by the time he is sixteen or seventeen into the dullard he has far too usually become; and, if it be not the will of God, it is for us to devise, by His grace, the means and manner of preventing it. It concerns our whole country. It is not a vain thing for us; it is our life.

I have dwelt upon that subject because it stands in the very front of our perplexities, and because it is to us especially that people have a right to turn—I will not say for a solution—but at least for suggestions born of daily experience, daily disappointment, daily thought and endeavour, daily prayer.

But we cannot separate it, after all, from other questions, some of which seem even less capable of satisfactory settlement; questions, too, which involve economic considerations which squires and farmers understand better than we do, and on which their lament is continuous and loud. In the country, for example, one parish priest after another deplores to me the frequent wretchedness and squalor of our farm cottages, with all the attendant and consequent mischiefs to body and soul. Yet, even while he deplores it, he tells how hopeless of solution the problem seems to be.

The
Housing
of the
Poor.

To build a decent cottage costs double or treble what it used to cost, and the funds once available for such building have meantime simply disappeared. Even there, it is humiliating, it is faithless, it is unworthy of our traditions and heritage, to say or believe that no conceivable solution can be found. In our towns the problem is more perplexing still. I cannot of course enter now into its intricacies, but I would fain lay it on you, as you go in and out among the poor, to keep your eyes open to notice evils which need correction, to bring them to the attention of those whose duty it is to right such wrongs, and to try by every means in your power to raise the standard of public opinion on the whole matter. These sanitary and social things are affecting the moral, the religious life of the English people. If we shut our eyes to them we are neglecting a plain duty. Enlist to the utmost of your opportunity the co-operation of all who hold official position in our towns—magistrates, councillors, vestrymen, guardians, sanitary inspectors, police—on the side of the highest and purest moral standard. This special duty is surely ours and not another's. There is no body of men whom such perplexities concern more closely than they concern the Clergy, set to minister to the needs, moral and religious, of our parishes. It would not be for the first time in our history were practical suggestions of remedy to have their birth in the minds of those who, as messengers of God to His children, feel the burden of such evils to be heavier than they can bear.

Remember at least, that in all such things it is our

sacred privilege to bear our part. The English Parish Priest is appointed to serve, not a congregation, but a parish ; he is set with a quite peculiar, nay unique, commission as the "parson," the *persona*, the representative man in that definite bit of English territory, in order that, according to the Elizabethan words, he may "therein occupy every opportunity of doing good."

The
"par-
son's"
part.

Never was that opportunity larger or more sure than now. As our thought ranges back along the story of English life, it rests upon no period in which it mattered more than it matters now what manner of men they were to whom the trust of that ministry was given. Among the most noteworthy of our encouragements, of our helps, stands this : that men expect of us so much. Their standard of what the Parish Priest should be was never, I suppose, in all our history so high as it is to-day. Those who come nearest to satisfying that demand will ever be the first to feel and know how many are the misspent opportunities and the squandered hours ; how often the cowardice or negligence of which we all can tell, has marred what might have been a victory for God against the powers of wrong. It is at hours like this, when, with all our varied needs and perplexities and sins and failures heavy upon our hearts, we have knelt together at the Table of our Lord, and asked at His hands for pardon and for strength, that we realise at once the greatness of our calling and the power He gives us of answering to that call.

DIOCESAN MATTERS

THE matters with which I have hitherto tried to deal during this Visitation have been for the most part matters relating to the life of the Church as a whole. The difficulties, the encouragements, the hopes we have spoken of, are not peculiar to the Diocese of Winchester. But before I close my Visitation addresses I desire to say something which more closely concerns ourselves.

Diocesan
statistics.

I alluded in Winchester Cathedral a week ago to the special characteristics of our Diocese, and notably to the strange variety of its parishes, and therefore of our work therein. I have already examined with close attention the answers furnished to my Visitation Questions, but the value of the information thus placed in my hands consists even more in the utility of such papers for constant reference in the correspondence of every day, than in the means it affords of compiling statistics of a Diocesan kind. To tell the truth, I attach no supreme value to statistical tables of that sort. Parish returns, made carefully from year to year, are of immense importance when the circumstances of that parish or the work done within its borders are under

consideration. Statistics of a general Diocesan sort, on the other hand, while no doubt they have their use, may often be of little more than academic interest. There is a real peril in our resting upon them overmuch, when the figures, from the nature of the case, are necessarily figures and nothing more. Take, for example, a return as to the number of communicants in a whole Diocese. In the case of the Parish Priest, such figures represent men and women whom he knows, and he can usually explain, more or less satisfactorily, such fluctuations as take place from year to year. To Diocesan tables of figures no such personal element belongs, and theories based on occasional fluctuations in the list would probably be either fanciful or misleading, perhaps both.

It is often useful, however, to contrast the facts and figures of to-day with the facts and figures belonging to the same area half a century or a quarter of a century ago. In the case of the Diocese of Winchester, as a whole, this cannot easily be done. The change which took place when, in 1877, South London was transferred from our Diocese to the reconstructed Diocese of Rochester, throws all our totals out of gear.

I have been studying with some care the Diocesan Conspectus (as he called it) which Bishop Sumner drew up in 1854, and the further Conspectus which he drew up in 1864. They give a mass of valuable and interesting information, and they afford evidence, if any were required, of the extraordinary pains Bishop Sumner took during his long Episcopate to master, and then to record, the detailed facts about every part of the vast

Contrast
with
former
days.

Bishop
Sumner's
Charges.

Diocese under his rule. Besides his *Conspectus*, the Bishop, in a series of no less than ten Charges, as remarkable for their finished literary style as they are for their hortatory earnestness and power, describes, at intervals of about four years, from 1829 to 1867, the condition of the area in which we are all at work. The picture thus presented—in his earlier years at least—differs so strangely from any with which we are ourselves familiar, that it is worth while to dwell for a few minutes upon some of the contrasts.

The problems are nominally the same as ours. We read of an increasing population in the town centres, and no adequate provision for their spiritual needs—of a sparse rural population, ignorant and unambitious, their cottages often insanitary, their lives monotonous, their care for religious observances very small. Or again, we read of the laxity with which Sunday is observed, and of the spread of irreligious literature, and of strange misrepresentations of the Christian Faith. The Clergy are reminded of their responsibility for rural schools, and of the need of some system of Continuation Schools for the older lads and girls. Advice is given as to increased evangelistic work both in Church and out of doors—and so on.

Expressed in these general terms, it would seem as if the condition of matters corresponded closely with what we see before our eyes, and we might readily be depressed by the thought that after the lapse of more than fifty years it should still be necessary for a Bishop to say the same things. But turn from the general to the particular. See what the actual circumstances thus

described were like, and we find ourselves immediately in surroundings startlingly different from any that we know.

For example, I spoke in my last Address of the obvious and harmful insufficiency of cottage accommodation in some of our parishes. But contrast the present state of matters even at its worst with what my predecessor describes in 1829. I quote his words.¹

“One parish thus situated consists of twenty-nine cottages, the inmates of which amount to two hundred and ten persons. By an actual admeasurement of the dimensions of each cottage, it appears that their aggregate contents include an area of three hundred and forty-seven feet in length, by two hundred and eighty-two in breadth, giving an average space of about twelve feet by ten for each cottage. In many of these tenements no fewer than eight, and in some instances, as many as ten persons, occasionally of different families, are crowded together day and night, the children literally sleeping under the beds of their parents, without distinction of age or sex.”

“Cottages” in
1829.

Again, what should we now say to the arrangements whereby the sole education of the children under the Poor Laws in one large workhouse was that for one hour every day, “the girl who cooked taught the children to read”? The Inspector who describes this state of things naively adds, “This has also contributed to make them turn out badly.” As a remedy it was decided to appoint a woman “to give instruction in reading and religious duties, and to teach and superintend needlework.” “The advantages,” we are told, “were most striking,” but the writer goes on to

Education
in 1833.

¹ Charge of 1829, p. 48.

say that after two years "the Vestry discontinued the schoolmistress, although her salary was only £10 per annum and her dinner."¹

Turning to other matters, the Bishop deprecates the system of paying the poorer people their parish wage, or dole in Church on Sundays;² while as regards Sunday observance generally, the account shows that our present perplexities, to some of which I shall presently allude, are, to say the least, no worse than those which led Bishop Sumner to speak of them in 1829³ as so grave "as almost to preclude hope of material improvement."

Church
Services
in 1829.

Then as regards services in Church: In 1829 there were 319 parish Churches in Hampshire. In 158 (or rather less than half) of these, Divine Service took place twice on Sunday; in most of the remaining Churches, once. In only eleven Churches in the whole county were there three Services on Sunday. I can find no exact statistics as to the frequency—or rather the infrequency—of Celebrations of Holy Communion, but the Bishop earnestly urges that each parish should look forward to arrangements, if possible, for having at least one Celebration of Holy Communion every month.⁴

It is evident that in stimulating the Clergy to more evangelistic zeal he encountered keen opposition on the ground that extra, or "external" services, whenever held, were contrary to law. In 1833 he finds it necessary to adduce a grave and technical argument of

¹ Charge of 1833, p. 62.

² 1829, p. 46.

³ p. 44.

⁴ For the present facts, see below, p. 176.

several pages to prove that Cottage Readings or Cottage Lectures were not actually illegal if held by the Parish Priest within his own parish ; and so late as 1854 he shows in a not less careful manner that an outdoor address or sermon involves no positive breach of the laws of Church or Realm.

As regards the Clergy themselves, in the earlier of the years covered by these Charges, a considerable proportion of the Rural "livings" both in Hampshire and Surrey were held by non-resident incumbents, often Ecclesiastical dignitaries who, under the system of pluralities, left their parish work to be discharged by curates, these curates in some instances serving two or even three parishes. Thanks in part to legislative interference and in part to such Diocesan administration as his, that particular evil came practically to an end some years before his tenure of the See expired.

Non-resi-
dence.

The very brief summary I have given of some of the facts disclosed in these interesting Charges may serve as a cordial for drooping courage when we are tempted to despondency about the slow progress we have made in the efficiency or vigour of the Church's pastoral work. Let the advance be as steady in the next half century as it has been in the last, and our grandchildren will have cause to thank God.

But there are other fields in which the comparison tells—as it seems to me—less favourably for us than it does in the matters I have mentioned. In every one of his earlier Charges, Bishop Sumner calls attention to the need of new Churches and Mission Chapels to meet the rapid increase of population. It is

Church
Building.

mainly to South London and its suburbs that he refers, and for that reason the figures he produces for the Diocese as a whole cannot easily be tabulated in any form admitting of comparison with our present facts. Speaking generally, it seems to me that the Church Building efforts made in the first half of the century¹ exceed in generosity anything we have ourselves seen. The number of small subscribers was far less than it is nowadays, but rich men, on the other hand, gave much more largely. It was then, apparently, no very unusual thing for one or two rich men to combine to build and endow a new Church without asking for outside aid. Such things, though not absolutely unknown within more recent experience, are surprisingly, to my mind almost unaccountably, rare. I can understand (though I deplore) the attitude of a rich man who says, "I disapprove of what you are doing, and I can give you no help whatever." What I find hard to understand is the position of the very rich man who ardently wishes God-speed to our efforts, expresses his satisfaction in being able substantially to co-operate in what he feels to be of paramount necessity, and contributes, say £10 or £20 or even £50 towards the sum, say of £5,000, we are straining every nerve to raise in order to help the very region or parish from which he draws his wealth. That, however, is by the way. Thank God we have extended the interest, the privilege, of such gifts, over a much wider circle, though the individual donors of large sums are fewer than of old.

¹ I do not, of course, include the aid given by the Parliamentary Grant, which stands quite by itself.

This is not the occasion, I think, for elaborate statistics, but let me set down a few very general facts about the growth of population in one great centre, Portsmouth. In 1801 the population of what we know as the borough of Portsmouth was in round numbers 33,000. In half a century it had more than doubled, the population in 1851 being more than 72,000. In 1861 it had reached 94,000. In the last 38 years it has again doubled, being at this moment about 190,000.

Growth of
Popula-
tion.

Ports-
mouth.

The present rate of increase in that one borough is about 4,000 people every year. Now 4,000 people form a very adequate population for a town parish. If, therefore, we were really to keep pace with the growth of population in Portsmouth alone, we ought to be building a new Church and endowing the parish attached to it with all the necessary material of men and things, not now and then, but every single year. This would mean an outlay of say £15,000 every year on this matter alone. Even so we should not be doing anything to overtake past arrears, but merely keeping abreast, in one great town, of the needs which each year brings.

I have spoken of Portsmouth only, because what I desired to adduce was some single object-lesson. But, as you know well, the difficulties and necessities of Southampton are almost as great, although the total population is of course much smaller. In 1829 the population of this borough was about 14,000. It is now more than five times as large, the population of the old borough being more than 78,000. An area containing 24,000 people has been added to it, making in

South-
ampton.

all a present population of 103,168. The increase during the last seven years has been at the rate of about 3,000 people every year.¹

Statements of this kind are apt to make the heart sink when we consider how comparatively trifling, after all, are the means at our disposal for grappling with a necessity which increases in gravity even while we speak. When I say the means "at our disposal," I allude, of course, to the funds definitely entrusted to the officers of the Church, local or central, for use in this particular way. One keeps asking, Why should the task become so increasingly difficult? All this increase of houses must be enriching somebody. Why is so small a dribblet of the increment allowed to trickle into the custody of those who wish to spend it for the religious and moral help of these teeming populations?

No doubt the difficulty is largely increased by the transfer of property from individuals to joint stock companies, whose directors are said to be unable, as directors, to do what they would gladly have done had they been private individuals. This is very obvious, for example, at Eastleigh, where a quiet country village has been suddenly transformed by the South-Western Railway Company into a stirring centre of artisan life. Its population, already nearly 9,000, will soon be immensely increased, and, somehow or

¹ Bournemouth, which has increased, within the memory of many persons now alive, from a hamlet of two or three houses with some 20 inhabitants, to a County Borough of more than 50,000 people, stands in a different category and has characteristic difficulties of its own.

other, provision for those souls must be made. I am not, of course, blaming the directors. In the case of Eastleigh they have, I suppose, done all they legally can do, and the consideration of the matter in its ethical and economic bearing would lead us astray from to-day's purpose.

Now there are three different ways in which endeavours may be made to meet difficulties of the sort I have described. The first is by starting in each neighbourhood a fund for its particular needs; enlisting local interest and local generosity, and trusting to that. The obvious drawback is that the very places and neighbourhoods which need help most are those in which no money is forthcoming.

A second mode, which was common a few years ago, and is still in use in some Dioceses, is to start a series of central funds. One is for Church building, another for the support of the Clergy who are to serve in the Churches and to be responsible for the pastoral care of the new parishes, another for the lay agents (men and women) essential to such work in our towns, and yet another for the schools,—and so on; each of these having its separate machinery and officers and committee, and making its separate appeal to the Diocese, or to the Church as a whole. This mode of procedure has the practical advantage that in the long run it seems, as a matter of fact, to elicit the largest aggregate sum of money. But it does it at the cost of heavy working expenses and of constant irritation, owing to the multiplicity of the appeals, which are of its very essence.

Different
systems of
Diocesan
Finance.

Win-
chester
Diocesan
Society.

In this Diocese, as in some others, an attempt has been made which depends for its success upon a more intelligent and thoughtful co-operation on the part of all. *One* society is formed for promoting Church work within the Diocese; the building of Churches and mission rooms; the support of living agents, both clerical and lay, both male and female; the Church day-schools; the Sunday-schools; the missions to itinerant folk, gipsies, hop-pickers, and the like; the more normal work of Diocesan missionaries as such; the special arrangements for the deaf and dumb; and (with the single exception of Temperance work, which stands by itself) almost any other effort which can fairly be brought within the range of our Church's direct activities for the moral and religious help of our people.

Those who undertake the collection, the management, and the administration of this central fund in its multiplied branches are at present, one and all, unpaid, except that our honorary Organising Secretary is allowed the service of a clerk. The working expenses are thus reduced to an absolute minimum.

Such is our system as it stands. I repeat that for its successful working the intelligent co-operation of the whole Diocese is required; and it is because I think this has not been adequately given that I desire, as Bishop, to call attention to it on this great occasion. There are regions in our Diocese—I could easily particularise, but it is undesirable at this moment—in which the responsibility we lie under has never been realised by those who have money to give, and who if once they had taken in the gravity of our needs, and the manner

in which we try to meet them, would, I am absolutely sure, not leave us to struggle as we are struggling now. I have very little doubt that if, instead of one Diocesan Fund, we were now to start seven or eight, and—with separate machinery and paid secretaries—were to make vigorous appeals for each, we should obtain more money, accompanied by constant complaints of overlapping and constant suggestions that we ought to have an amalgamated Central Fund—just such a fund, in short, as we now administer.

We should obtain, however grudgingly, more money, but we should mar or even lose the opportunity which now is ours for laying emphasis in word and act upon our corporate life—our Diocesan unity—and our answerableness to God for the discharge of the duty which in that respect is ours. I ask the Clergy who hear me, and who read this Charge, to spare no effort towards bringing home to their people that solemn and anxious responsibility. Remind them that in some Dioceses these objects are promoted by separate and independent agencies, for each of which subscriptions are invited. Our theory of concentration carries this corollary, that donors who are spared a wearisome and puzzling series of separate appeals for these essential objects, should respond more substantially to the call of the one representative and trusted agency which includes them all. I gravely doubt whether this fact has been quite realised in our Diocese. There are, I know, a great many people who feel bound, as a matter of plain duty, to consider attentively any request of a Diocesan sort which comes to them with the full weight of Diocesan

authority. But often and often when I am anxiously noting the amount given, either in a Church offertory, or as an individual's subscription to our Winchester Diocesan Society, the thought recurs : Do these Churchmen and Churchwomen really remember that we have deliberately decided, for the convenience of the donor, to include in this one weighty appeal a whole series of objects which might well have been the subjects of five or six? Remind people that their one subscription is for half a score of different objects. But remind them yet more of the solemn significance attaching to the common life of such a Diocese as ours, wherein, if one member suffer all the members suffer with it ; wherein it is so terrible a thing for the rich man or the rich parish to see his brother have need and to shut up his compassion from him.

Church
Restora-
tion.

Some years ago nearly every country parish in our Diocese raised funds for what was called the " Restoration " of the Parish Church. For the moment the local need seemed paramount. In the last decade of Bishop Sumner's forty years' Episcopate, say from 1859 to 1869, the records startle us by the evidence they afford as to the amount of such work that was everywhere in progress, and the immense sums of money that were thereon expended. So great was the devotion which prompted the gifts, that it is unkindly to give expression to the wish, which many of us entertain, that the donors had in some places been less eager or less generous, and that the " Restoration " of the Churches had been postponed until architects and builders had come to understand

a little more about the fabrics they so ruthlessly "improved." While, however, as archæologists, we deplore the irreparable mischief that was sometimes done, we can afford, as Churchmen, to thank God for the encouragement and help thus given to the re-kindled spirit of devotion among the people of our parishes.

Those times have passed away, and our needs are now of a different sort. Our Church fabrics are almost universally in such condition as to stimulate the reverence of those who gather within their walls. It is time that the residents in each country parish, and especially in our richer country parishes, should look further afield, and meet the new needs which the changing times have brought. There is this difference between the needs of that day and the needs which are now before our eyes. Then, if the funds were not forthcoming to "restore" a Church, the Church could remain unrestored, and the services could still go on. There was often no urgency in the matter. Nowadays, in face of the clamorous needs I have been trying to describe, the people in some of our parishes must simply, if our richer folk withhold their hand, go without the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

I am anxious not to exaggerate. Thank God, we are going forward. Our Diocesan Fund this year shows promise of being larger than before. I see no sign that we are suffering on account of present controversies within the Church. It is open to any donor so to ear-mark his gift as to ensure its going to the object, if need be to the very parish, the donor chooses, though, of course, convenience of administra-

Progress
and Ad-
ministra-
tion.

tion is promoted if the Council is left unhampered in its action. A few persons—a very few—have written to me to suggest that the Council, before making a grant to any parish, should enquire minutely into the character of the Services, of the Ritual, and presumably of the doctrine taught; but I think the overwhelming majority of our subscribers see the utter impossibility of our constituting a Council of more than a hundred members into a court of enquiry, doctrinal and liturgical, and are persuaded that disciplinary action belongs to another province from that of the administrators of funds. I am not speaking, of course, of parishes, should there ever be such, in which an incumbent should choose to place himself outside the region of Episcopal direction or control. Such a case, if it ever arose, would require to be considered on its merits.

Clergy
Sustenta-
tion Fund.

Before passing from the subject of Diocesan finance, I must say one word about our Clergy Sustentation Fund. It is quietly growing. Our income is largely derived, as you know, from the investment of the great donation of one prominent Churchman. It would be disastrous were we to rest content with what has already been done, and I cannot believe that the laymen of our parishes, and especially our Churchwardens, will allow the fact that the Clergy find it naturally more difficult to plead for this Fund than for others to stand in the way of collections being made for the Fund in our Parish Churches. A biennial offertory from every parish would give opportunity to laymen who desire quietly to mark their appreciation of the reticent courage and the chivalrous self-denial of scores of our rural Clergy in

face of difficulties which would have daunted many men. If once those difficulties were adequately realised by our richer laymen, they would be startled to find what had so long been tolerated in a community like our own.

In all these matters I am purposely avoiding here the statistics of our Funds. You will find a few such statistics appended to the Charge when it is published.¹ But I am anxious from this Chair to speak rather of principles than of figures.

I hope there is no department of possible work in town or county in which some vigorous effort is not now being made. I am certain that in regard to every such endeavour there is room, and more than room, for a wholesome discontent with what we have attained.

To take an example. No Diocese has, I believe, secured in the matter of Higher Religious Education either so long a list of first-rate lectures and lecturers, or so good an average attendance at so many centres. And yet in my belief we are only at the dawn of our work in that matter. There are literally and without exaggeration many thousands of people in this Diocese who ought to be taking advantage, and might be taking advantage if they would, of the opportunities now within their reach. Is the thing being everywhere pressed as it might be? May I again urge every Parish Priest to satisfy himself for certain whether what we offer is really unavailable or useless for his own parishioners, or any of them; and, if he does so satisfy himself, to tell us why, in order that we may if possible introduce some more excellent way. The

Higher
Religious
Education.

¹ See Appendix E.

difficulties are, I am persuaded, conquerable. I trust, before another Visitation comes, we may be able to look back in wonder at the comparative smallness of what has hitherto been accomplished.

Study of
Holy
Scripture.

It is closely linked in with the whole subject of our adult study of the Bible. Evidence is lamentably abundant that, with all our modern Church activities, the Bible itself, among the more educated classes of the English people, is less read and studied than it used to be. Time forbids that I should to-day discuss the reasons for this. But the fact is, I fear, certain, and the fault, my brethren of the Clergy, must, in part at least, be ours. I confess to being disappointed and depressed to notice from the Visitation Returns how few and far between are the Bible-Classes in our parishes, whether for educated or uneducated people. Without them I do not see how we can expect to maintain, in an age of higher general education, the Bible reading, the Bible knowledge and the Bible reverence, which were more common among our elders when we were boys than our boys and girls find them to be among their elders now. Never was there a time surely when means were so available as they are to-day for our making such classes interesting and attractive, provided only we give to the task the necessary pains. I speak on the strength of full personal experience when I remind you how ready and encouraging is the response such endeavours can evoke, both among highly educated people and among our working men, and how fruitful of good they may in either region be. If, as is often the case, such classes, say for working lads and

girls, must be held on Sunday, it is of course difficult—it may even be impossible—for the Clergy themselves to be the teachers. But it is our part in every case to equip teachers, men or women, for this duty, or to set them on the right road for self-equipment, so far as human help can go. No single need, so far as I can judge, is greater than the need of such classes. No single part of our work can, with more confidence and hope, be committed in our prayers to God.

There are other Diocesan matters upon which I should like to dwell did time permit. Winchester is one of the Dioceses which in the future story of the Church of England will be notable as having been in our own day a centre of the revival of Deaconess life within the Church. The subject is too great for me to enter upon it now. I have a profound conviction that the development of that Order will stand out among the distinctive efforts of the Church in the century that lies before us. I would to-day only ask you to study the subject.¹ It is thought about and prayed about far too little. I long to see it occupy a larger place than it does in our Diocesan organisation, and it may readily be developed upon more lines than one. I am convinced that it is only because most thoughtful Churchwomen are in ignorance of what it means and of what it may do for the Church, that we find so few offering themselves as candidates for an Order which had its essential place in the Church of the first days, and which is not less needed in our own.

Deacon-
esses.

¹ I may specially and confidently recommend *The Ministry of Deaconesses*, by Deaconess Cecilia Robinson. (Methuen.)

Temper-
ance
Work.

Our Temperance work is in good hands. Its hold upon Diocesan sympathy and support is strong, and the Visitation replies bear constant testimony to the fact that we are nearly everywhere gaining upon the foe. God speed the battle !

One course of action those of us who dwell in towns can unanimously take : We can make definite and sustained effort to secure that the men elected to any office which gives them control in questions either of licensing Public Houses or of restraint of vice are, in the highest sense, men of the right kind. I do not mean men committed to some particular view on controverted questions, but men who, above all considerations of a lower sort, will deliberate upon and decide these matters from a public-spirited and a Christian point of view. Efforts to that effect cannot possibly be in vain.

Rescue
Work.

A word let me say about another branch of special effort on behalf of those who have made shipwreck of their lives. Together with the many things in past history and present work for which we are able in this Diocese to thank God, we have to confess with shame the moral stain which is ours, not alone in military and naval centres like Aldershot and Portsmouth, but in Southampton and Bournemouth, and elsewhere. We are striving to make our Rescue work vigorous and continuous and effective, and we need more money for that saddest and most humiliating of all our tasks. Help us then in all your parishes, so that at the least we may maintain in full and active vigour both our central Home at Basingstoke and the local Refuges

upon which so much depends. But, after all, such work, necessary, nay, Christ-like as it is, is but the ambulance work, so to speak, and not the war itself. God calls us to gird our loins for the fight itself, against the vile sin which makes the Rescue work inevitable. Are we waging it as we ought among our men—and specially our young men—in town and country? I know, none knows better, the difficulties of the campaign and the danger of harming where we mean to help. But here, as elsewhere, we have a right to look for the right judgment which will come in answer to our prayers, and it is certain that until we have done something to raise the tone and standard of our young men's lives, our Rescue work will be the beginning at the wrong end. It would be utterly unfair were we to attribute all our difficulties to the military and naval element in our midst. The collection, far from family and home life, of great numbers of young men, at Aldershot, at Portsmouth, at Newport, in the Channel Islands, and now on Salisbury Plain, brings difficulties of its own; but the evil is rampant too in places where there are neither soldiers nor sailors, and we dare not thus push into one corner a responsibility which rests upon us all. Make it, I beseech you, the subject of thought and plan and prayer.

It may seem to you, my brothers, that I have not said very much about the results to be gathered from your answers—for the most part careful answers—to the Visitation enquiries. They have been in my mind all through; but, as I said to-day at the outset, I look forward to using them mainly in personal intercourse

Answers
to Visitation
Questions.

with individual Parish Priests. Such intercourse should grow closer every year. The bewildering size and variety of such a Diocese as ours makes the Bishop's task a harder one at the outset than it becomes as time goes on and facts are grouped and correlated and gradually understood. I have already compiled columns of notes for separate and individual enquiries, arising out of what you have told me ; but the variety is so great that to attempt to speak about them generally and comprehensively is, I fear, beyond my power to-day.

Rose-
coloured
spectacles?

Just one or two points I will notice. I should like to feel sure that the satisfaction generally expressed as to the moral and religious condition of our country parishes is fully justified ; that there have been no rose-hued spectacles anywhere in use. Sometimes I am puzzled to reconcile the happy and bright generalisations with which the confidential paper ends, with the statistical basis on which these generalisations rest. I shall understand this better a few months hence, when I have had more conversations on the spot.

Sunday
Observance.

There is one point, however, upon which the consensus of desponding testimony is extraordinary, and the subject calls imperatively for some words from me to-day. I asked for information as to the observance of Sunday. While the returns exhibit a variety of opinion upon almost every other subject, there is a practically unanimous expression of fear with regard to what is described as "a steady diminution in the quiet observance of the Lord's Day." The matter is clearly one which calls for anxious and prayerful thought. You will remember that our Diocesan Conference, after dis-

cussing the subject two years ago, appointed a strong Committee which reported to last year's Conference. That Report is contained in the present year's *Diocesan Kalendar*,¹ and its suggestions are entitled to our mature consideration. I shall be anxious, as the months pass, to ascertain from some of those who have written strongly upon the subject, the character of the desecration to which in general terms they refer. That we are losing something of that reverent observance of the Lord's Day which has been a characteristic of English life, and one of the sources of England's strength, is, I am afraid, unquestionable.

I have already pointed out that more than fifty years ago Bishop Sumner deplored the same thing. But the evil has now taken a new form. I doubt whether any part of England suffers more than do some parts of our own Diocese from the curse (I can use no milder word) of the organised Sunday excursions on a large scale throughout the summer. Now I have never myself been able to share the apprehensions with which some of my best and most honoured friends regard all forms of Sunday recreation. I have, for example, always advocated the opening in London of our Free Libraries and National Museums and Galleries. The result of what has been done in that matter is, in my judgment, wholly satisfactory so far as it goes; and I believe it to be in entire accord, if we may reverently say so, with the will and example of our Blessed Lord. But this is a different matter altogether, and I am certain that many of those who advocate it in theory would take a different view

¹ pp. 244—5.

if they were to watch its operation in practice. It seems, so far as I can judge, to have no redeeming features. The theory of the jaded townsman and his family being able cheaply to enjoy a Sunday in country air has too often, as you in Southampton know well, degenerated into the incursion of a noisy mob, not into the country at all, but into the streets and public-houses of a large town, spending their hours, as all may see, in a way which can for themselves lead to no sort of good to body, mind, or soul, while their advent is an unqualified evil to the place whereto they come. I repeat, that if some of those who give their names to the promotion of what may sound a beneficent plan would watch its actual outcome, they would doubt the wisdom of their course

For us as Christians, whatever our differences as to the precise manner of Sunday observance, this at least we all have in common : the conviction that the Lord's Day must be in some true manner consecrated. We must be in a position to ask His blessing upon the use of it which we are making, or encouraging, for the recreation, in the truest sense, of soul, of mind, of body. Once secure that principle inviolate, and we can afford to consider with an open mind the various ways in which different sorts of people may profitably, or at least harmlessly, use the day.

Sunday
Bicycles.

We must be on our guard against the mistake of supposing that all changes in this matter are definitely evil. Not a few of the compilers of our Visitation Returns speak of the Sunday desecration as consisting mainly in the greatly increased use of bicycles on that

day. Such a statement requires, in my judgment, some qualification, or, at the least, some amplification. Mischievous as it certainly would be that those who have hitherto been accustomed to spend Sunday as a day of rest and worship should transform it into a day of mere amusement, there are, I think, not a few cases in which those who now spend a summer Sunday on a bicycle have hitherto spent it in a way far less wholesome either to soul or mind or body. If we contrast the present use of the day with a use which consisted in idle loafing or lying in bed, we have to chronicle a gain rather than a loss.

A wise Parish Priest will, I think, press upon Sunday bicyclists who belong to his parish the responsibility which is theirs to see that, in following the growing custom, they neither lose for themselves the privilege and help of Divine worship, nor impose extra labour on other people. Bicycling is less mischievous in this latter way than, for example, boating, or even railway travelling. Melancholy accounts are indeed given to me as to the disturbance and labour caused in some small country parishes by the arrival of bicyclists in large numbers. This is especially true where there is some regular excursion of a club or other body of bicyclists; and a duty rests upon those who organise such excursions, if indeed they must take place, to avoid the mischief I have named.

Next, he will do his utmost to facilitate the attendance in his own Church of strangers who may thus be visiting or passing through the parish, making provision, if necessary, for the custody of bicycles, and in

other ways letting his readiness to be helpful become known. Most of us, I suppose, know of cases in which such arrangements have met with an appreciative response, and have been productive of definite good.

Thirdly, he will warn his parishioners, and especially his young men, against letting this recreation draw them away from such active help as they might otherwise give to Sunday agencies within the parish itself for the promotion of a manly Christian life.

To me it seems that we shall defeat our own object if we simply denounce as sinful a habit which our denunciations will certainly not bring to an end in England, while our action may in some cases almost have the effect of what is called manufacturing sins. I am not unaware of the extreme difficulty which surrounds the subject. The recurring reference to it throughout the Visitation Returns shows that it is important enough to justify me in having called attention to it to-day, and I leave it with confidence and hope to your attentive consideration.

Sunday
Schools.

To the answers given about Sunday Schools I have devoted special attention. The whole system of our Sunday School work is at present, as you know, being investigated and weighed by a large committee of skilled men, clerical and lay, who, under the guidance of an indefatigable chairman, are trying to make arrangements for increasing the efficiency of Sunday Schools both in town and country. I am profoundly convinced that there is no department of our work which more urgently requires overhauling than does the management of our Sunday Schools. I confess to some dis-

appointment at finding how large is the number of parishes in which no systematic instruction and detailed guidance is given to Sunday School Teachers. My question, you will remember, was, "What special instruction is given to Sunday School Teachers, and by whom?" The answers are very various. In some cases classes have been attempted and have been discontinued. In others it is thought unlikely that they would be useful. In many cases even large bodies of teachers are left, at the most, to draw what instruction they can from the syllabus or handbooks furnished to them. I doubt whether the need for more systematic help, or the good result which has ensued from it both in town and country parishes, is adequately realised. One Parish Priest, for example, replies, "They have the advantage of my sermons in Church." But what we want is something altogether different from most sermons in Church. Upon this matter I hope I may have the opportunity before long of taking counsel with the Chapters of those Rural Deaneries which I have not yet been able to meet in conference.

The number of Services held on Sundays and on week-days in our Parish Churches is a matter for separate conference and counsel rather than for a general summary. But a very few statistics may be interesting. It is curious to contrast them with the figures I have to-day quoted as to the use made of these same Churches sixty years ago. There are only, I think, five Parish Churches in the Diocese which are invariably closed from Sunday to Sunday, and the circumstances are in every case exceptional; but there

Services
in our
Churches.

are not a few instances in which the week-day use is so infrequent as to be hardly worth the name. Daily prayer is said all the year round in 182 Churches; and during part of the year in 276. Services on Ascension Day may be said to be now universal, Services on Saints' Days to be general.¹ 320 Parish Churches are open daily for private prayer. The Holy Communion is celebrated monthly (or oftener) in 557 Churches; fortnightly (or oftener) in 523 Churches; weekly (or oftener) in 404; and daily in 12. It is impossible for me as yet² to state accurately in what number of the cases here tabulated there are two Churches in the parish; and this question is material to the accuracy of the totals, though it does not largely affect the general result.

I have evidence before me of a steady increase in the number of Churches in which daily prayer is publicly said. Few practical questions are to my mind more difficult than the question of what absolute rule, if any, we should lay down for ourselves in that matter.

Daily
Service.

That such Daily Service was contemplated by the compilers of our Prayer Book can hardly be disputed. But, as I have elsewhere had occasion to say, it is another question how far the Prayer Book Rules and Rubrics were intended to be rigidly and uniformly enforced whatever the local or personal circumstances might be. You will remember that in the

¹ The variety of the form in which this enquiry is answered makes precise statistics difficult.

² Some of the returns have only reached me within the last few days. Owing to vacancies and other causes, a very few are still lacking.

Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. the Preface run thus :—

“All Priests and Deacons shall be bound to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly, except they be letted by preaching, studying of divinity, or by some other urgent cause.”

These last words were altered in 1662 into—

“not being let by sickness or some other urgent cause.”

It is obviously open to argument whether the “preaching” and “studying” which in 1552 were included in the term “urgent cause” were or were not intended to be covered by the modified Rubric of 1662. To me it seems probable that Bishop Cosin and his colleagues took deliberately a sterner view than their predecessors. In Bishop Cosin’s “Notes on the Book of Common Prayer,” he writes: ¹

“Here is a command that binds us every day to say the Morning and Evening Prayer; how many are the men that are noted to do it? It is well they have a back door for an excuse to come out at here; for, good men! they are so belaboured with studying of divinity, and preaching the Word, that they have no leisure to read these same Common Prayers; as if this were not the chief part of their office and charge committed unto them. Certainly the people whose souls they have care of reap as great benefit, and more too, by these prayers, which their pastors are daily to make unto God for them, either privately or publicly, as they can do by their preaching: for God is more respective to the prayers which they make for the people than ever the people are to the sermons which they make to them.”

¹ Works, L.A.-C.T., vol. v, p. 10.

Where the parish is a large one, and the Church is within reasonable reach, the duty of saying the prayers in Church rather than at home appears to me scarcely to admit of doubt. The difficulties arise in small and scattered parishes, and in cases where the Church is so far from the people, and so far, perhaps, from the Vicarage, as to make it hopeless to expect the attendance of other worshippers than the Parish Priest ; while to him, if he be infirm, the tax, especially in winter, may be so severe as to impair his efficiency for other work. In ordinary cases, however, I am increasingly convinced of the good that may ensue to Priest and people alike from an ordinary observance of our Church's rule. Although ordinarily observed, the obedience need not be of a slavish kind. I have been told by Parish Priests that they could not leave home for a single day on account of the duty of saying Daily Prayer in Church, although practically there was no congregation. This straining of the rule seems to me quite unnecessary, and I see nothing whatever to prevent a Parish Priest in a country parish from announcing by a notice in the Church porch on any particular day that he is prevented by other duties from conducting the customary Service. It is indisputably bad both for pastor and people that the rule should be followed in so burdensome and even servile a manner as to prevent the incumbent from ever absenting himself from his parish—for however excellent a purpose—for a single day ; and the Prayer Book rule, even when rigidly interpreted, provides deliberately for such occasions.

My brothers, it would be easy to run on into many

other matters affecting our life and work and the message we are commissioned to deliver. I have said nothing, for example, about the subject of Foreign Missions, which has, thank God, had for many years so living and strong an interest for us all throughout the Diocese. You will not, for that reason, imagine that I fail to set it where it must always stand for Christian people, in the very forefront of our thoughts and prayers.

I will not detain you longer. The Addresses I have delivered will I hope be in your hands in a few days. May God grant His blessing upon our thoughts and words. We have touched upon many things that are difficult and perplexing; we have of necessity left untouched many things that we might profitably have looked at together. May our ministry to Him, our ministry to His children, grow by His grace from strength to strength. *“To Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,”* to Him, in quietness and confidence, we come with all the burden of our failures, of our faithlessness, *“unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”*

APPENDIX A.

(See page 32.)

PRIVATE CONFESSION.

I.

Besides the examples given in the text the following references to Private Confession may perhaps be regarded as possessing a quasi official character.

(a)—Visitation Articles.

The allusions to Confession in the Prayer Book Rubrics, quoted in the body of the Charge (p. 29) form the basis of a series of questions asked by various Bishops in their Visitation Articles from 1619—1679—such as “whether the Minister exhorteth those troubled or disquieted to open their grief, that they may by the Minister receive the benefit of absolution.” These words, or others not dissimilar, will be found in the Visitation Articles of Bishop Andrewes, 1629; Bishop Overall of Norwich, 1619; Bishop Montague of Norwich, 1638; Bishops Lindsell (1633) and Dee (1636) of Peterborough; Bishop Duppa of Chichester, 1638; Bishop Juxon of London, 1640; Bishop Wren of Norwich, 1662; Bishop Fuller of Lincoln, 1668; Bishop Gunning of Ely, 1679.

(See 2nd Report of the Royal Commissioners on Rubrics, 1868, pp. 540, 577, 591, 560, 634, 648, 525, 627.)

(b)—Irish Church Canons.

Canon xix. of the Irish Canons of 1634 (subsequently re-enacted in 1701) runs as follows:—

The Minister of every parish, and in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches some principal Minister of the Church, shall, the after-

noon before the said administration [of the Holy Communion] give warning by the tolling of the bell, or otherwise, to the intent that if any have any scruple of conscience, or desire the special Ministry of Reconciliation, he may afford it to those that need it. And to this end the people are often to be exhorted to enter into a special examination of the state of their own souls; and that finding themselves either extreme dull, or much troubled in mind, they do resort unto God's Ministers to receive from them as well advice and counsel for the quickening of their dead hearts and the subduing of those corruptions whereunto they have been subject, as the benefit of absolution likewise for the quieting of their consciences, by the Power of the Keys which Christ hath committed to His Ministers for that purpose.

(c)—*Convocation of Canterbury and Lambeth Conference :*

On May 9th, 1873, it was resolved in the Upper House of Convocation of Canterbury, "that a Committee of the whole House should consider and report upon the teaching of the Church of England on the subject of Confession." The Report was presented on July 23rd, 1873.

On July 3rd, 1877, the following Resolution was passed in the Upper House of Convocation: "That in consequence of certain recent disclosures on the subject of Confession, this House requests his Grace the President to call the attention of the Lower House to the accompanying Declaration on the subject, agreed to by a Committee of the whole House in July, 1873, and to invite their immediate consideration of the same."

On the following day (July 4th, 1877) the Lower House of Convocation of Canterbury resolved, by 62 votes against 6— "That this House concurs in the Declaration on the subject of Confession sent down to it from the Upper House for consideration."

The words of the Declaration are as follows:—

In the matter of Confession the Church of England holds fast to those principles which are set forth in Holy Scripture, which were professed by the primitive Church, and which were reaffirmed at the English Reformation.

The Church of England, in the Twenty-fifth Article, affirms that Penance is not to be counted for a Sacrament of the Gospel,

and, as judged by her formularies, knows no such words as "Sacramental Confession."

Grounding her doctrine on Holy Scripture, she distinctly declares the full and entire forgiveness of sins, through the blood of Jesus Christ, to all who bewail their own sinfulness, confess themselves to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment of life, and turn with true faith unto Him.

It is the desire of the Church that by this way and means all her children should find peace. In this spirit the forms of Confession and absolution are set forth in her public services, yet, for the relief of troubled consciences, she has made special provision in two exceptional cases.

1. In the case of those who cannot quiet their own consciences previously to receiving the Holy Communion, but require further comfort or counsel, the Minister is directed to say, "Let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word, and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's Holy Word, he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice."

Nevertheless it is to be noted that for such a case no form of absolution has been prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, and further that the Rubric in the first Prayer Book of 1549, which sanctioned a particular form of absolution, has been withdrawn from all subsequent editions of the said book.

2. In the Order for the Visitation of the Sick it is directed that the sick man be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feels his conscience troubled with any weighty matter, but in such case absolution is only to be given when the sick man shall humbly and heartily desire it.

This special provision, however, does not authorise the Ministers of the Church to require from any who may resort to them to open their grief a particular or detailed enumeration of all their sins, or to require private Confession previous to receiving the Holy Communion, or to enjoin or even encourage any practice of habitual Confession to a Priest, or to teach that such practice of habitual Confession, or the being subject to what has been termed the direction of a Priest, is a condition of attaining to the highest spiritual life.

The Declaration thus adopted by both Houses of the Canterbury Convocation formed the basis of the Declaration made by the Lambeth Conference of 1878, which runs as follows:—

Having in view certain novel practices and teachings on the subject of Confession, your Committee desire to affirm that in

the matter of Confession the Churches of the Anglican Communion hold fast those principles which are set forth in the Holy Scriptures, which were professed by the Primitive Church, and which were reaffirmed at the English Reformation; and it is their deliberate opinion that no Minister of the Church is authorised to require from those who may resort to him to open their grief a particular or detailed enumeration of all their sins, or to require private Confession previous to receiving the Holy Communion, or to enjoin or even encourage the practice of habitual Confession to a Priest, or to teach that such practice of habitual Confession, or the being subject to what has been termed the direction of a Priest, is a condition of attaining to the highest spiritual life. At the same time, your Committee are not to be understood as desiring to limit in any way the provision made in the Book of Common Prayer for the relief of troubled consciences.

II.

The following references will be serviceable to those who desire to study the question of the use of Private Confession as encouraged, or sanctioned, or limited, or denounced by Church of England writers in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In no investigation is it more necessary to regard the context of any sentence quoted. As I have already pointed out in the Charge, most of the writers to whom reference is here given were answering disputants, either Roman Catholic or Puritan, who maintained that the Church of England, as reformed, had repudiated the idea of Private Confession in any shape. In reply, one writer after another points out how clear and unswerving is the sanction our Church gives to one specific sort of such Confession. But unless the whole context is examined, some particular sentence in defence of our Anglican position may easily seem to carry us further than the writer intended, and the question remains:—What was it, in teaching or in visible custom, which led the opponents to suppose that Private Confession had been so entirely extirpated?

In compiling this list, which might easily be extended, I have availed myself of the references given by Dr. Pusey in his preface to his edition of Abbé Gaume's *Manual*, but every reference has been carefully and independently examined, and while I have omitted some of Dr. Pusey's references, which seemed to me

unimportant or barely relevant, I have added a considerable number which he does not give. I have arranged the references, roughly speaking, in chronological order, without regard to the character of what is said, or to the side upon which the writer stands in the controversy.

1. WILLIAM TYNDALE (1477—1536).
Doctrinal Treatises (Parker Soc.), *Of Antichrist*, pp. 245—6,
Of Confession, 263—4, 266, 281, *Of Anointing*, 336—7,
 341.
Expositions, on 1 S. John i. 9, pp. 150, 296; the Practice
 of Prelates, p. 305.
Answer to More, pp. 22, 105, 172.
2. HUGH LATIMER (1472—1555), Bishop of Worcester.
Sermons (Ed. J. Watkins, 1824), vol. ii., p. 398; 3rd S.
 after Epiph.
3. JOHN BRADFORD (1510—1555).
Letters and Treatises, pp. 237—8 (P. S.).
4. NICHOLAS RIDLEY (1500—1555), Bishop of London.
Letter to Master West (P. S.), p. 338.
5. THOMAS CRANMER (1489—1556), Archbishop of Canterbury.
Annotations, Art. xxxix. (P. S.) vol. i., p. 95, *Questions and
 Answers concerning the Sacrament*, vol. i., p. 116, &c.
6. MILES COVERDALE (1485—1565), Bishop of Exeter.
Remains (P. S.), *Defence of a poor Christian Man*.
 S. James v., pp. 481—2.
7. WILLIAM TURNER, Dean of Wells (1520—1568).
The Old and New Learning, see *Tracts of Anglican
 Fathers* (Hatchard, 1809), vol. iv., pp. 607—8.
8. THOMAS BECON (1511—1570).
Potation for Lent (P. S.), Early Writings, pp. 100—1.
9. JOHN JEWEL (1522—1571), Bishop of Salisbury.
Defence of Apology (P. S.).
 Part II., vi., 1, p. 351.
 ,, vii., 2, pp. 365—382 on S. Matt. xvi. 19.

10. EDMOND GRINDAL (1519—1583), Archbishop of Canterbury
Remains, Injunctions at York, p. 140 (P. S.).
11. RICHARD HOOKER (1553—1600).
Ecclesiastical Polity, VI., iv., 1 (Ed. Keble, 1874), vol. iii.
VI., iv., *Discipline of Repentance*, esp. §§ 1, 15, 16
(pp. 12, 13, 49).
VI., vi., *Absolution of Penitents*, esp. §§ 2, 3, 4
(pp. 73 foll.).
12. ARCHDEACON FRANCIS MASON (1566—1621).
Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, London, 1625 (Lib. v.,
cap. 10), pp. 632—640.
13. RICHARD CRAKANTHORP, D.D. (1567—1624).
Defensio Eccl. Angl. contra Archiep. Spalat., cap. lxxx.,
§ 6 (Lib. A. C. T., p. 565).
14. JOHN BOYS, Dean of Canterbury (1571—1625).
Exposition of Festival Epistles and Gospels, see 19th S.
after Trin. (Edit. 1615, pp. 201 foll.).
15. LANCELOT ANDREWES (1556—1626), Bishop of Winchester.
Sermon on Absolution (Lib. A. C., T.), vol. v,
pp. 82—101.
Minor Works, (Lib. A. C. T.), *Notes on Book of Common
Prayer*, p. 155.
Devotions (Parker and Co., ed. 1887), p. 67.
16. LEWIS BAYLEY (1565—1681), Bishop of Bangor.
The Practice of Piety, pp. 432—439 (Fifty-third Ed.,
London.)
17. JOHN DONNE, D.D. (1573—1631).
Sermons, vol. ii., p. 207 (Edit. 1649).
18. GEORGE HERBERT (1593—1633).
The Country Parson, Cap. xv. (“The Parson comforting.”)
19. FRANCIS WHITE (1577—1638), Bishop of Ely.
Answer to Fisher, pp. 263, foll., (Ed. 1824).
20. RICHARD MONTAGUE (1577—1641), Bishop of Norwich.
A Gagge for the New Gospel, London, 1624, pp. 83—89.

21. WILLIAM CHILLINGWORTH (1602—1644).
Works, Sermon VII. on S. Luke xvi. 9, vol. iii., pp. 185
 foll. (Ed. 1838).
22. WILLIAM LAUD (1573—1645), Archbishop of Canterbury.
Works, History of Troubles and Trial, iii., p. 331 (Lib.
 A. C. T.)
Private Devotions, pp. 187—8 (Ed. 1858).
23. DR. JOHN WHITE (1574—1648).
The Way to the true Church, London, 1610, pp. 226—231.
24. DR. GEORGE HAKEWIL (1579—1649).
Answers to a treatise written by Dr. Carier, London, 1616,
 pp. 266—272.
25. JOSEPH HALL (1574—1656), Bishop of Norwich.
Resolutions and Decisions of Cases of Conscience, case ix.,
 vol. vii., pp. 451 foll. (Ed. 1837).
Balm of Gilead, Comforts for the Sick Soul, Cap. ii, 1, 2,
 vol. vii., p. 122.
26. JAMES USHER (1580—1656), Archbishop of Armagh.
Answer to a Jesuit, 1, civ., pp. 74—149 (Cambridge, 1835).
27. JOHN HALES (1584—1656).
*Tract concerning the Power of the Keys and Auricular Con-
 fession*, 1677.
28. THOMAS MORTON (1564—1659), Bishop of Durham.
A Catholike Appeale for Protestants, pp. 253, 270 (Ed.
 1609); London, 1610. pp. 253—260.
29. HENRY HAMMOND (1605—1660).
Commentary on S. James v. 16.
30. BRIAN DUPPA (1589—1662), Bishop of Winchester.
A Guide for the Penitent, pp. 4—7; London, 1660.
31. PETER HEVLYN (1600—1662).
Theologia Veterum; or the summe of Christian Theologie,
 pp. 454—460; London, 1654.
32. JOHN BRAMHALL (1593—1663), Archbishop of Armagh.
Works, v., p. 190, *Protestants' Ordination defended*, pp. 213,
 122 (Lib. A. C. T.).

33. JEREMY TAYLOR (1613—1667), Bishop of Down and Connor.
(Ed. Eden).
Holy Living, vol. iii., p. 208. *Of Repentance*.
Holy Dying, vol. iii., pp. 403 foll. *Rules for manner of
Visitation of Sick*.
Works, vol. iv., p. 503. *Sermon on Growth in Grace*.
,, vol. vi., pp. 503—4. *Dissuasive from Popery*.
,, vol. vii., *Doctrine of Practice of Repentance*, chap. x.
esp. § 4, p. 438 foll., § 8, p. 473 foll.
34. JOHN COSIN (1594—1672), Bishop of Durham.
Works, vol. v., *On Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 99, 100
(Lib. A. C. T.).
Private Devotions, vol. ii., p. 121 (Lib. A. C. T.).
35. ISAAC BARROW (1630—1677).
Exposition of the Creed, vol. vi., pp. 50, 56 (Edit. 1830).
36. ANTHONY SPARROW (1620—1685), Bishop of Exeter.
Rationale of the Common Prayer, pp. 11 ff. 212 (Ed. 1722).
Sermon printed after the *Rationale*, pp. 312 foll. (Ed. 1722).
37. JOHN PEARSON (1613—1686), Bishop of Chester.
A Letter against Promiscuous Ordinations. *Minor Works*,
ii., p. 237 (Ed. Churton).
38. THOMAS COMBER (1644—1699), Dean of Durham.
Companion to the Altar, pp. 132—134 (Fourth Edition,
London, 1685).
The Occasional Offices Explained, pp. 308—313, 320 (Lon-
don, 1679).
39. SIR ROGER L'ESTRANGE (1616—1704).
The Alliance of Divine Offices, pp. 448 foll. (Lib. A. C. T.).
40. GEORGE BULL (1634—1710), Bishop of St. David's.
Life of (by R. Nelson, 1713), pp. 461, 462.
41. THOMAS KEN (1637—1711), Bishop of Bath and Wells.
Manual of Prayers, pp. 54 fol.
42. GILBERT BURNET (1643—1715), Bishop of Salisbury.
Exposition of the XXXIX Articles, Art. 25. *Of Penance*,
p. 362 foll. (Ed. 1831.)

43. ROBERT SOUTH, D.D. (1633—1716).
Sermons, No. LXI., vol. iv., pp. 211, 212 (Ed. 1823).
44. JOSEPH BINGHAM (1668—1723).
Origines Eccl., London, 1840, Book xviii., *A particular account of Confession*, chap. iii., vol. vi., pp. 464—493.
Two Sermons on Absolution, and Two Letters to the Bishop of Winchester thereupon, viii., pp. 365—415.
45. WILLIAM WAKE (1657—1737), Archbishop of Canterbury.
Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, Article XIII. Printed in *A Preservative against Popery*, vol. iii., pp. 30, 31. London, 1738.
46. JOHN STEARNE (1660—1745), Bishop of Clogher.
The Clergyman's Instruction, pp. 418, 419. Oxford, 1807.
47. EDMOND GIBSON (1669—1748), Bishop of London.
Preservative against Popery, vol. ii., tit. viii., chap. 1 and 2.
48. GEORGE BERKELEY (1684—1753), Bishop of Cloyne.
Works, iv., p. 278 (Edit. 1871).
49. THOMAS WILSON (1663—1755), Bishop of Sodor and Man.
Parochialia, Works (Lib. A. C. T.), vii., pp. 65, 68—70.
Sermon XXXVI., On the Creed, ii., p. 409.
Maxims, v., pp. 532, 540.
50. JOHN HEY, D.D. (1734—1815), Norrisian Professor of Divinity, Cambridge.
Norrisian Lectures (Camb. 1798), on Article XXV, pp. 222, 224.
51. HERBERT MARSH (1758—1839), Bishop of Peterborough.
Comparative View (Ed. 1816), pp. 195—7.

III.

In addition to these references to writers of former days I venture to call attention to the following among contemporary books and pamphlets on the subject. It would, of course, be easy to increase the list to an indefinite extent. The books,

pamphlets, and speeches I have selected are such as seem to me to bring out special points in the controversy or to afford historical information of a valuable kind.

52. SAMUEL WILBERFORCE (1805—1873), Bishop of Oxford and of Winchester.
Addresses to Candidates for Ordination (Parker, 1878), 7th ed., pp. 109—115.
Addresses to Rural Deans (July 15, 1873). Printed after his death.
53. WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK (1798—1875), Dean of Chichester.
Life by Stephens, vol. ii., p. 477 (Bentley).
54. ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL TAIT (1811—1882), Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury.
Primary Charge to the Diocese of London (1858), pp. 41—65 (Rivingtons).
55. EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY (1800—1882), Canon of Christ Church.
Preface to Abbé Gaume's Manual for Confessors (Parker, 1878).
Habitual Confession not discouraged by the Lambeth Conference. A letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Parker, 1878).
56. GEORGE MOBERLY (1803—1885), Bishop of Salisbury.
Bampton Lectures for 1868, pp. 226—228 (Parker).
57. CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH (1807—1885), Bishop of Lincoln.
Confession and Absolution, *Miscellanies*, vol. ii., pp. 189—210 (Rivingtons).
58. WILLIAM CONNOR MAGEE (1821—1891), Bishop of Peterborough and Archbishop of York.
Auricular Confession in the Church of England. A speech (Dublin, 1852).
A Charge to the Diocese of Peterborough (1878), pp. 54—56 (Isbister).

59. CHARLES PARSONS REICHEL, Bishop of Meath.
The History and Claims of the Confessional (1884)
 (Hodges, Dublin).
60. REV. R. C. JENKINS, Hon. Canon of Canterbury.
The History of the Confessional (Riley, Folkestone, 1877).
61. REV. J. R. LUMBY, D.D. Norrisian Professor of Divinity
 Cambridge.
St. Ambrose and St. Chrysostom on Penitence (Deighton
 and Bell, 1877).
62. REV. A. D. WAGNER, Vicar of St. Paul's, Brighton, and Chan-
 cellor of Chichester Cathedral.
Christ on Cæsar. A letter to the Archbishop of Canter-
 bury (Brighton, 1887).
63. FREDERICK TEMPLE, Bishop of Exeter and of London, and
 Archbishop of Canterbury.
Primary Charge to the Diocese of Canterbury, pp. 19-24
 (Macmillan, 1898).
64. REV. T. T. CARTER, Rector of Clewer, Hon. Canon of Christ
 Church.
Confession. A sermon preached at Clewer, June, 1877
 (Masters).
The Freedom of Confession in the Church of England. A
 letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Rivingtons,
 1877).
*The Present Movement a True Phase of Anglo-Catholic
 Church Principles*. A letter to the Archbishop of
 Canterbury (Rivingtons, 1878).
65. REV. CHARLES JOHN ELLIOTT, Vicar of Winkfield.
*An Enquiry into the Doctrine of the Church of England on
 Private Confession and Absolution* (Rivingtons, 1859).
66. J. J. STEWART PEROWNE, Bishop of Worcester.
Confession in the Church of England. A sermon, with
 Appendix and Excursus on John xx. 23 (Macmillan,
 1877).

67. REV. NATHANIEL DIMOCK.
Confession and Absolution in the Church of England. A letter to his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury (Hardwicke and Bogue, 1877).
68. JOHN WORDSWORTH, Bishop of Salisbury.
Considerations on Public Worship and on the Ministry of Penitence. A letter to the Clergy of the Diocese of Salisbury, pp. 48-67 (Longmans, 1898).
69. EDWARD KING, Bishop of Lincoln.
A Charge delivered at his Fifth Triennial Visitation, 1898, pp. 53-58 (Williamson)

APPENDIX B.

(See p. 97.)

FASTING RECEPTION OF THE HOLY COMMUNION.

THE following Report was unanimously adopted by the Upper House of the Convocation of the Province of York, May 4th, 1899 :—

Our attention has been called to the teaching of various Manuals of Instruction and Devotion which are widely circulated among members of our Church, and to special pastoral directions, in which Fasting Reception is made one of the things “required of them who come to the Lord’s Supper,” though it is not included in the requirements set out in the Catechism, and nowhere enjoined in the Prayer Book or in any authoritative document of our Church.

We are very far from desiring to lessen in any degree the devout reverence with which the Sacrament of Holy Communion ought to be approached; or to discourage Fasting Reception where it is found to provide a salutary self-discipline. We readily acknowledge that a custom which has prevailed from early times throughout the Church generally till the sixteenth century, and which has been advocated as helpful to the spiritual life by many teachers of our own Church, is always likely to find wide acceptance among us. At the same time to describe reception without fasting as a sin¹ is wholly unwarranted by the teaching of Holy Scripture, and is therefore inconsistent with the Ordination Vow. We further hold that there are grave reasons both from the history of the custom and from its essential character against making the practice of Fasting Reception one of obligation.

1. The circumstances of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist exclude the thought that taking food shortly before disqualifies

¹ See the Report on Fasting Communion adopted by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, May 5th, 1893, which is given *in extenso* below. Clause 8.

for Reception. The same conclusion follows from St. Paul's treatment of this Sacrament in 1 Cor. xi. Nor is the obligation of Fasting Reception supported by any authority of Scripture or by any apostolic ordinance. The conjecture of Augustine that it was one of the points which St. Paul "set in order" (1 Cor. xi. 24) rests on no historical foundation.

The custom of Fasting Reception would naturally arise when the service was transferred from a late hour in the evening (according to our reckoning) to an early hour in the morning. The cause of this change is not recorded. It may have been made in the Gentile Churches, in which the Jewish reckoning of time was superseded by the Roman, in order to place the service at the beginning of the Roman day, as the institution had been at the beginning of the Jewish day. But not to insist on any special explanation of the origin of the change, it is enough to observe that there is no reason for supposing that it was made in order to secure a fast from the beginning of the day to the time of Communion.

When the custom of Fasting Reception was once established even in a limited range, it was likely to spread, owing to the general tendency of the Oriental mind towards ascetic practices.¹ But the adoption of the custom was ultimately accompanied by serious evils. Infrequent reception and non-communicating attendance, which cannot be wholly dissociated from Fasting Communion, came to be general; and these customs find no support in the teaching and practice of the Primitive Church.

Fasting, again, is a means to an end and not an end in itself. It is valuable or not according as it fulfils the proposed object. It may be employed to obtain for the Communicant the fullest command over his powers of attention and devotion. But it is evident that the fitness of fasting for obtaining this result depends in a large degree upon climate, domestic habits, age and the like; and exhaustion, as we all know, is itself in most cases fatal to spiritual self-command. And more than this: while the spontaneous combination of prayer and fasting corresponds with a spiritual instinct, it is contrary to the tenor of apostolic teaching, and indeed of the teaching of the Lord Himself,² to make the observance of a period

¹ Consider, *e.g.*, the interpolation of the word "fasting" in later editions of the New Testament. In 1 Cor. vii. 5, "fasting" is certainly not a part of the original text. In Mark ix. 29, it is probably an interpolation. While the whole verse Matt. xvii. 21, is probably an interpolation based upon the later reading of Mark ix. 29.

² See, *e.g.*, St. Mark vii. 15: "There is nothing from without a man, that, entering into him, can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man."

of material abstinence a necessary condition of participating in the highest spiritual service of the Church. The inherent discordance between the custom of Fasting Reception and its object, becomes still more obvious, if fasting is made obligatory from a fixed hour, when it is remembered that the duration of the fast and its physical effects will necessarily vary in individual cases, and are practically indeterminate. Nor can it be overlooked that the different conditions of town and country parishes introduce serious difficulties in the uniform application of any such rule. It may be added that so far as Fasting Reception is advocated on the ground of reverence for the Sacrament, the arguments have a wider range. They may be used with equal, and some will think with greater force in favour of fasting after reception.

Such considerations show that Fasting Reception is one of those matters of Ecclesiastical Discipline which every "particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish" with a view to the spiritual health of its members. And that the English Church since the Reformation has ceased to require fasting before Holy Communion, leaving the matter to individual liberty, appears to be clear from the fact that there is no direction upon the subject in those passages of the Prayer Book in which the requisites of individual preparation are plainly specified, nor in any of our authoritative documents. If it be urged that there was no need to prescribe the observance in 1549, the same cannot be said of 1662.¹ In other words our Church has virtually applied to this matter the principle of St. Paul's teaching on a similar question: *Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him... Let each man be fully assured in his own mind* (Rom. xiv. 3, 5).

The following is the Report adopted, *nemine contradicente*, by the Upper House of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, May 5th, 1893:—

1. That in the Apostolic age the Holy Communion was administered in connection with the gathering together of Christians to share in an appointed evening meal.

2. That the practice of communicating in the early morning appears to have arisen about the close of the first century, probably in order to secure a safer as well as a more reverent celebration, and, by the time of St. Cyprian, to have become so

¹ Compare the first Rubric of the Service for Baptism of those of Riper Years, in which Fasting is recommended (1662).

fully established that it was regarded not only as preferable but as the proper practice, and as commemorative of the Lord's Resurrection.

3. That the practice of communicating in the early morning, together with the common association of fasting with prayer, led to the practice of communicating only when fasting, and that fasting reception of the Communion became the regular and recognised usage of the Church before the end of the fourth century.

4. That from the close of the fourth century this regular and recognised usage was formulated in rules for the clergy in canons of local and provincial councils.

5. That fasting reception of the Communion was the prescribed rule of the Church of England during the Anglo-Saxon period, and continued to be so to the time of the Reformation.

6. That these strict rules were nevertheless subject to relaxation in cases of sickness or other necessity.

7. That at the Reformation the Church of England, in accordance with the principle of liberty laid down in Article XXXIV., ceased to require the Communion to be received fasting, though the practice was observed by many as a reverent and ancient custom, and as such is commended by several of her eminent writers and divines down to the present time.

8. That, regard being had to the practice of the Apostolic Church in this matter, to teach that it is a sin to communicate otherwise than fasting is contrary to the teaching and spirit of the Church of England.

APPENDIX C.

(See p. 128.)

EPISCOPAL VETO.

The Parliamentary Return (No. 212, printed by order of the House of Commons, 7th June, 1899) gives the cases under the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874. The total number of "cases in which the Bishop was of opinion that proceedings should not be taken" is tabulated as 17; but, as more than one representation was sometimes made in a single parish, the total number of separate cases is really 13 only. Nine different Bishops were concerned. Six of these are dead. The three cases in which Bishops now alive are concerned belong to the years 1876 (All Saints, Clifton), 1886 (Tedburn), and 1888—90 (St. Paul's Cathedral). Some of the reasons assigned for the exercise of veto should be noted. For example, Archbishop Tait, in November, 1877, and in January, 1878, exercised the veto on the ground that in each case the incumbent undertook to submit to the decision and order of his Diocesan. In November, 1878, Archbishop Tait exercised his veto on the ground that the points of law raised were at that moment *sub judice* in the Courts, and that pending their decision no proceedings should be taken.

No legal return is obtainable as to the cases in which the Episcopal Veto has been exercised under the terms of the Church Discipline Act of 1840, as the Bishop is not in such cases called upon to register his decision. But, as was shown in the Parliamentary debate of last Session, the fact remains true, after including the very few such cases, that only three living Bishops have ever exercised the veto in any form.

APPENDIX D.

(See page 132.)

RITUAL IRREGULARITY.

The following letter was sent to every Incumbent in the Diocese:—

Private.]

FARNHAM CASTLE, SURREY,
February 22nd, 1899.

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,

It is, as you are aware, my intention, God willing, to hold a formal Visitation of the Diocese in the Autumn of this year, and I hope to issue before long a paper of enquiries, addressed to each Incumbent, the replies to which will furnish me with the statistical information I ought to possess about all our parishes and the services and work therein.

In the meantime there are certain matters relating to the conduct of Divine Service upon which I am anxious to be better informed.

My examination of the forms of Special or Additional Services, recently submitted to me, has clearly shown how few and far between are the irregularities or faults in that respect which call for my authoritative interference. I have purposely taken time to give quiet consideration to the subject, and I have no reason to anticipate that any difficulties will be found in our bringing all these "Special Services" into harmony with the Book of Common Prayer. Should there be any "Special Services" now in use, copies of which have not yet been submitted to me, I shall be glad to receive them without delay.

This letter, however, relates not to those Special or Additional Services, but to the manner of conducting the ordinary Services prescribed in the Prayer Book. Recent discussions and controversies have called attention to a wider variety of usage and ceremonial in the Church than can legitimately be brought within the limits defined by our existing rubrics. I have, of course,

during the last twelve months, given constant attention to the matter. I have, I think, been in communication with most of the clergy in whose parishes such questions have arisen, and it is with genuine thankfulness that I am able to say that, so far as I am aware, every formal direction which I have hitherto felt it necessary to give, has been complied with by the clergy concerned. Our work however, is by no means done yet. There are in several parishes questions of great importance still unsettled, and it is in order that I may be better able, in a matter of no small difficulty, to act fairly and consistently towards all that I think it well to send this letter to every Incumbent in the Diocese.

In a Church like ours it is of paramount importance that where difficulties or irregularities exist they should be dealt with, in the first instance, individually and privately by personal intercourse between the Bishop and the parish priest. This principle of procedure, which I look upon as fundamental, does not, of course, preclude the possibility of subsequent action of a different kind. But it reduces to a minimum the risk of mischievous public controversy, and preserves the proper relation of a Diocesan Bishop to his clergy. On any reasonable theory of Episcopal Government the Bishop must have a regulative power in questions of rubrical interpretation and obedience. I accept that responsibility, and I invite every parish priest who is in doubt as to the right interpretation of any rubric, or whose action in liturgical matters is impugned, to seek my counsel and direction in his difficulty.

Upon certain liturgical points which have given rise to controversy, I desire to state explicitly what is, to the best of my judgment, the rule of the Church of England. I am ready, if desired, to explain to any Incumbent who is perplexed by my directions, the grounds on which in each case I base my opinion. But I think it more suitable in this letter simply to state without argument or comment what, after full consideration, I believe to be right.

1. No Celebration of Holy Communion ought to take place without, at least, the minimum number of Communicants prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer.

2. No Reservation of the consecrated Elements is permissible.

3. In celebrating the Holy Communion it is not permissible, in ordinary circumstances, to omit the recitation of the Commandments, or to administer the consecrated Elements otherwise than with individual recitation of the full prescribed words. If special arrangements are desired, as for example when, on a great festival, the number of communicants is likely to be very large, my sanction ought to be asked beforehand for what is proposed.

4. In order that there may be no question of using, in the office of Holy Communion, any other form than that prescribed, no books or cards containing other prayers or forms ought to be upon the Holy Table, even if the additional prayers be intended solely for the private devotions of the officiant.

5. If it be desired to use wine mingled with water, the mixing ought to be effected elsewhere than at the Holy Table, and not as a ceremony.

6. The "Manual Acts" ought not to be intentionally hidden from the view of an ordinary communicant.

7. The habitual attendance of children at Celebrations of the Holy Communion is undesirable. If children are occasionally permitted to be present, with a view to their better understanding of the Service, the Order of Service ought not to be modified in any way, nor ought the children to take any part not ordinarily taken by non-communicants who may be present.

8. The ceremonial use of Incense is not permissible.

9. In any official notice of the Holy Communion no other designation of the Holy Sacrament ought to be used than one of the terms to be found in the Book of Common Prayer.

10. No phrase ought to be used in public notices or Services which carries the idea of prayer or intercession for the departed further than it is carried in the Book of Common Prayer.

11. The Athanasian Creed ought to be said or sung upon the days appointed.

12. The directions of the Book of Common Prayer ought to be followed with regard to the days for which Special Services are appointed.

I have mentioned a few only among many points of recent controversy. Those which I have mentioned concern the conduct of Divine Service as prescribed in the Prayer Book. I am taking other opportunities of dealing with such important matters as the use and abuse of private Confession, and with other questions unconnected with our public Services in Church.

I am thankful to know that most of those to whom I write are in full accord with the view to which I have here given expression, and that their usage in the conduct of Divine Service corresponds, or will readily correspond, to what I have said. If this be your own case I ask for no reply to this letter.

If, however, you feel a difficulty, on any one of the points I have mentioned, in bringing your usage into harmony with this interpretation of the rubrics, I would ask you kindly to write to me *at once* upon the matter, specifying the difficulty. I will then gladly consider with you the facts and circumstances, and give you such counsel, guidance, or formal direction as may be

required. Exceptional arrangements may be called for in exceptional circumstances, and to any such I will give my deliberate consideration.

Our single desire in the conduct of Divine Service is to strengthen and deepen the devotional life of those whose prayers we are privileged to guide, in loyal adherence to the distinctive doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, in which the Lord has appointed us to serve. I ask you, in all affection, to join with me in earnest and expectant prayer to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit that, as fellow-workers with our Blessed Lord, we may have grace and wisdom for so noble, so anxious, so responsible a task.

I am,
Your faithful Brother and Servant
in the Lord Jesus Christ,
RANDALL WINTON.

To each of the Clergy (176 in number) who, in reply to the foregoing enquiry, brought to the Bishop's notice any point of difficulty, the following letter, or some letter in similar terms, was sent:—

Private.]

FARNHAM CASTLE, SURREY,
March 20th, 1899.

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,

I thank you for bringing before me the difficulty you feel with regard to what I said in my printed letter of February 22nd upon Ritual matters. I have received many letters upon the subject, and I am thankful to find how few are the cases in which there is any serious divergence between the view I have endeavoured to express and the opinions or usages of the Clergy of the Diocese. I further acknowledge with gratitude the almost universal expression of a readiness to abide by any decision I may ultimately give.

I have prepared some memoranda upon the various points raised. You will understand that neither in my former letter nor in this do I attempt to give a formal and authoritative direction. I am most anxious that what we do should be the outcome of quiet consideration on the part of Bishop and Clergy, and that the necessity of issuing formal injunctions should, wherever possible, be obviated.

What I enclose herewith relates only to the point or points you have referred to. If, after weighing what I have now said, you continue to feel difficulty in the matter, please write to me again about it. If I do not hear from you I shall take it to mean either

that the difficulty has been met, or that you are prepared to accept what I have said, leaving with me, as Bishop of the Diocese, the responsibility for any inconvenience, if such should arise, in consequence of the advice I have given. In carrying out our present endeavour it is inevitable that there should be occasional inconvenience, and possibly even sacrifice or hardship. But it is not without advantage that individuals and congregations should be prepared to exercise some self-denial, some sacrifice of personal predilections, for the common good.

Very earnestly and hopefully do I trust that the outcome of these discussions, disturbing as they often are, may be to the strengthening of the Church's life and the furtherance of our common work for Christ.

I am,
Your faithful Brother and Servant
in the Lord Jesus Christ,
RANDALL WINTON.

The following are specimens of the separate memoranda enclosed in the foregoing letter. The wording of the memorandum was of course modified to suit different requirements, and these are only a few examples out of many :—

No. 1.—*Number of Communicants.*

I do not desire to insist in a rigid way upon the necessity, in all conceivable circumstances, of there being "three at the least" to "communicate with the priest." Many letters have been written to me as to occasions on which two communicants only have arrived, say, on a wet morning for an early celebration in a country parish. It is, in my opinion, hard on such persons to debar them from Communion because no one else has been so keen as they.

It may, however, be noted that the occasional necessity of withholding the Holy Communion from would-be recipients, for lack of fellow-communicants, may itself serve to stimulate among parishioners a common endeavour in a matter in which common action is specially significant. And I cannot feel that we should be loyal to the Prayer Book if we were to allow a celebration when only two communicants are present to become an ordinary custom instead of an occasional relaxation of the rule.

It is different in the case of mid-day celebrations of Holy Communion when a good congregation is in Church but communicants do not present themselves. It may be impossible or gravely inconvenient for the parish priest to satisfy himself in every case

beforehand that the prescribed number of persons desire to communicate ; but there ought to be in every case a *bonâ fide* expectation of communicants and a *bonâ fide* invitation to Communion. It is the clear teaching of the Church of England that the reception by communicants is an integral and necessary part of our Communion Service. And if there are large congregations of worshippers, but no one to communicate with the priest, the plain rule of the Prayer Book is set at naught. If, in deference to the rubric, it be arranged that three persons only shall communicate with the priest, while the rest of the congregation is there solely to worship, the spirit of the Prayer Book is, in my opinion, violated, even though the letter be observed. If, therefore, either early or at mid-day, experience shows that the requisite number of communicants is not forthcoming in ordinary circumstances, something is wrong. Either the celebrations of Holy Communion are being multiplied to a degree incompatible with the due observance of what our Church intended, or teaching is being given and usages adopted which run counter to that intention.

Similarly, with regard to the Communion of the Sick, the Prayer Book rule is explicit, and it ought not in my judgment to be impossible by careful arrangement to secure its ordinary observance. Should it happen that this is practically impossible, or that it is, in the case of some sick person, inexpedient on medical grounds, I think the parish priest is justified in using a reasonable discretion. If he find this necessity to be frequent, I should wish to be informed and to take counsel with him on the subject.

No. 2.—*Reservation of the Consecrated Elements.*

So very few letters have reached me with reference to the above that I print no memorandum.

The subject is an anxious one. The harm that has arisen from abuse of what might in other circumstances have been reasonably sanctioned is real though rare, and adherence to Prayer Book rule becomes therefore the more necessary, even if it may occasionally seem hard. After fullest thought and care, I feel bound to say that Reservation, in any true sense of the word, must not take place. Emergencies may arise when a rule ought to give way to a pressing necessity. *Necessitas non habet legem.* In such cases an Incumbent will rightly use his discretion and report to me at once what he has done. I am asked in a very few instances to authorise what cannot be called, in any ordinary sense of the term, Reservation : May the priest carry the consecrated elements straight from the Service to a sick bed ? I do not wish to prohibit this absolutely in all circumstances.

If the sick person be close at hand, sharing in spirit in the Divine Service while it goes on, to communicate him or her at the close of the Service is little different, it has been argued, from communicating, say in the Church porch, one who is physically unable to come forward. But such cases must be rare, and this kind of use of an Incumbent's discretion ought to be justified by some exceptional circumstances. It is impossible to prescribe for each detail. I can but rely on wise and loyal adherence to the principles laid down with such emphatic care in the Prayer Book. Among them is the principle that the sick communicant is entitled to the Service specially provided for his use.

No. 3.—*Omission of Commandments, &c.*

Our office of Holy Communion forms a coherent whole with which we must not lightly tamper. The reasonable arguments—which meet, I think, with general approval—in favour of restricting to occasional use the longer Exhortation (“Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye that mind,” &c.) are not, as it seems to me, fairly applicable to the reading of the Commandments—a prominent and distinctive feature of our English rite. Where, on a great festival, the number of communicants is so large as to necessitate the immediate sequence of one Celebration of Holy Communion after another, I should not wish to insist upon the repetition of the Commandments at every Celebration if it is gravely inconvenient or if the stress is very great. But such occasions are exceptional, and in ordinary circumstances the Commandments ought, in my opinion, to be always read. The time occupied is about four minutes.

Similarly with regard to the Words of Administration, some discretion may, I think, be reasonably exercised, for the good of all, at such times of pressure, especially where the officiant is single-handed; provided always that it be made clear by some means why the ordinary use is thus varied.

No. 4.—*Books in use at the Holy Table.*

I have, of course, no kind of desire to interfere with, or to direct what should be, the private devotions of the officiant; and the statement of my view was intended to apply only to books or cards provided for the officiant's obvious use at the Holy Table.

No. 5 and No. 6.—*The Mixed Chalice—The Manual Acts.*

I venture to refer those who are perplexed by the statement of my opinion to the careful argument and decision contained in the

Judgment delivered by Archbishop Benson in the Lincoln Case (pp. 4-13 and 46-52).

[The Judgment is published in pamphlet form by Messrs. Macmillan.]

No. 9.—*Designations of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.*

The advice I have given, if strictly followed, results in our losing from *official* notices the beautiful and expressive term, "The Holy Eucharist." But I find it difficult to see how, otherwise than by adherence to Prayer Book phraseology, we can at once follow a consistent rule and avoid the risk of the use of terms frequently misunderstood or open to legitimate criticism. It will have been observed that I have referred only to official notices; but I very earnestly trust that even in sermons or other teaching the use of the word "Mass" may be avoided. It gives rise, not I think unreasonably, both to misunderstanding and to irritation.

APPENDIX E.

(See p. 165.)

WINCHESTER DIOCESAN SOCIETY.

In 1898 the income of the W.D.S. was as follows :—Subscriptions, £2,590 8s. 4*d.*; donations, £596 5s.; offertories, £2,207 13s. 10*d.*; sundry receipts, £196 0s. 11*d.*; total, £5,590 8s. 1*d.* The expenditure during the same year was £6,428 11s. 3*d.* The expenditure thus exceeded the receipts by about £838. A special appeal was made to meet this deficiency; but as the expenditure must for the future be at least £7,000 per annum, and as special appeals cannot often be made, sustained effort is essential to the due carrying on of our Diocesan work. If it is to be done adequately, we ought, in my opinion, to have an assured income of at least £10,000 per annum.

The Organising Secretary and Treasurer, who will gladly receive contributions, is the Rev. the Hon. H. N. Waldegrave, Bookham Lodge, Cobham, Surrey.



